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# A Prince of Romance

Stephen Chalmers



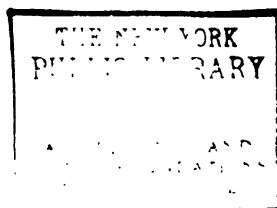
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# **A PRINCE OF ROMANCE**









# A Prince of Romance

BY

STEPHEN CHALMERS

AUTHOR OF "WHEN LOVE CALLS MEN TO ARMS," ETC.

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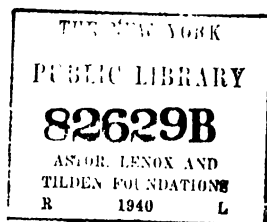
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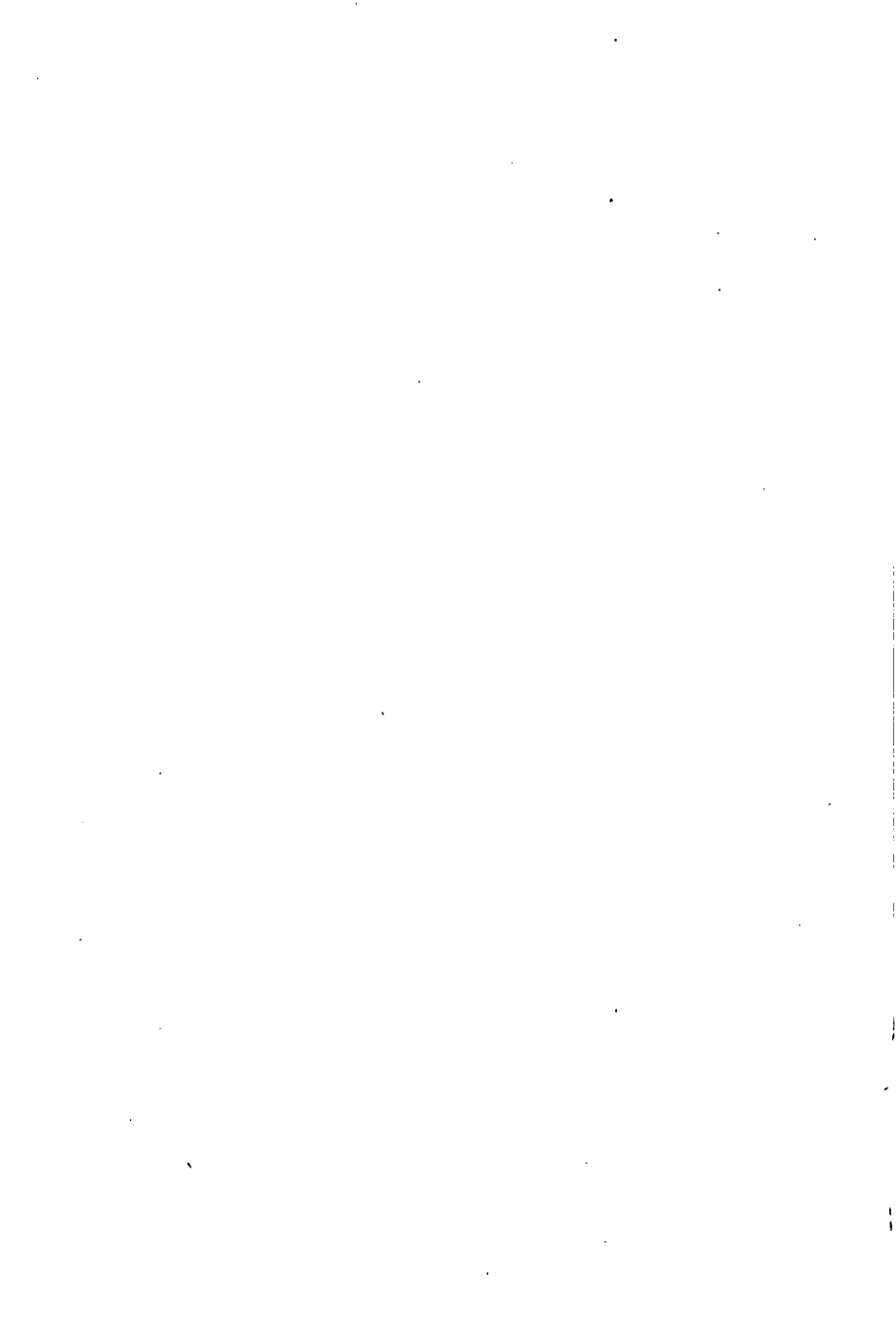
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# **A PRINCE OF ROMANCE**





# A Prince of Romance

## CHAPTER I

### THE SEA TAKES TOLL

**T**HE schoolmaster, Jamie Dalgleish, was in his "stewdy," as his domestic sanctum was called. He was in his "stewdious" attitude — flat on his stomach on the rag mat, his elbows for props, his hands for chin crutches, and the fender for a reading-desk. A peat fire in the open hearth cast a grotesque shadow of his head upon the wall behind.

A tin windmill, nailed to an apple tree in the kailyard at the back of the house, shrieked like a scurrying wraith. The sleety gale from the Atlantic drove up against the "stewdy" window with an ominous whining and shuddering. From the foot of the hill upon which the domine's square, whitewashed house stood, came a

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swelling roar and a snarling sigh as of growing seas and rising wind.

But the middle-aged man with the hewn face, the shaggy head, the tense blue eyes, and the outstanding brows, had little mind for the weather, save as it was a fitting accompaniment to his fierce dream. For the dominie was Scottish to the marrow. He was a present body, harboring a mind of the past. His dreams approached no nearer the age than the year 1745, when the last of Scotland's princes abandoned the lost cause of the Jacobite on Culloden Field. But it was never abandoned to Jamie Dalgleish, who could resurrect and reconstruct in a flash of imagination the whole warlike story from Macbeth to the last of the royal Stuarts. And in his dreams of the resurrected past, the dominie's imagination, steeped in history, racial poetry, and devotion to the lost cause, would draw the sword for Scotland and sweep the English forces into the peat-fire.

Up from the Atlantic swept a terrific blast. The schoolmaster hitched himself upon his elbows, but his wide, far-looking eyes never left the peat. The hailstone that tumbled down

## THE SEA TAKES TOLL

the chimney to fiery dissolution was a bursting hand-grenade, and the whine of the wind around the gables was the drone of the Cameron's slogan. . . . The call of the land was upon him to-night. To-night the breakers were tearing themselves in furious self-destruction upon the reefs of the Hebrides; the storm was shrieking in headlong abandon over the moors; the sheep were bleating at the folds; and old Ben Nevis and hoary Cruachan were jeering in the face of the mad west, with their craggy brows frowning and their eternal shoulders hunched.

The centuries rolled between the dominie's eyes and the glowing peat. Bloody Macbeth and Malcolm Canmore; John Comyn and Baliol and the Bruce; the clans — wild Cameron, traitorous Campbell, royal Stuart. The Highland blood chilled and thrilled in Dalgleish's veins at the thought of them — the Stuarts! The crown that came with a lass and went with a lass. And after? . . . Poor Jamie! . . . and Charlie — Bonnie Prince Charlie, the King o' the Hiellands.

The square, whitewashed house shook before

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the gale. The same storm was shaking all Scotland to-night, from the Pentland to the Tweed. Hech, ay! Let it shake it! Scotland had been shaken before, and it still stood, rugged and immovable. Scotland thrived on storm.

From the kitchen came a diminishing clatter of spoons and dishes. Margaret would be finished "redding up" the "tea things." She would be in presently. Then the picture would be complete — the dominie dreaming, or reading the stuff that his dreams were made of, flat on the rag mat; and Margaret, his lass, sitting in her dead mother's chair, darning old hose, or playing a tune on the fiddle, which at present hung over the bookshelf.

"Seems it will be in for a dour night," said Margaret, pausing in the doorway of the "stewdy" to give her hands a last wipe on her apron.

"Ay, ay," said the dominie, turning slowly to the half girl, half woman. He surveyed her for a while, and into his eyes crept a loving realization of her presence and identity. "They have been expecting it for days. When

## THE SEA TAKES TOLL

the gulls fly skreighin' inland and the kerry drives fast, it will be a storm."

There came a lull of the wind — rather a veering which abruptly let in a gust of sound from another point of the compass. From the rough, cobbled street by the eastern side of the house came a clatter of hurried feet.

"The Maclartys will be going to draw up the boats," said Margaret. Every sound in Inverlachie, by night or by day, meant something — precisely something and nothing else.

Dalgleish shifted uneasily on his elbows. He was of a mind to continue the dream.

"It will no be time," he grumbled. "The wind will go to the north afore morning. They will just be going to take a look —" He chuckled amusedly. "If Gabriel blew his horn, the Maclartys would go to the shore for a peek at the sky, with a view to drawing up the boats. Play us a tune, lass. It's a grand night for something mournful."

"Mournful!" exclaimed Margaret, her brown-eyed face adimple with laughter. "Is it no mournful enough with the wind whistling around the gables —"

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"Toot!" he interrupted, "when ye are feeling romantic, play romantic tunes, or read romantic books. When ye are feeling glum as the rock o' Ailsa on a wet night, play a funeral march, or read a tragedy, or go down to the shore and sing back at the sea. Then ye get the feel o' the thing that's in your heart. Where's the sense of playing lively tunes when your heart's in the Hielands, or away with the ghosts. It's a waste of good emotion, Margaret."

Margaret smiled and tuned up the fiddle. Presently she began to play one of the old Jacobite airs that mean so much to the Celtic temperament.

Charlie will come again some day,  
Over the sea to Skye.

The dominie immediately relapsed into the dream. In the air and in his imagination was a tale of Scotland and Prince Charlie, redcoats and clansmen, fiery crosses that waved in the night, beacons that flared on northern crags, and the wail of the pibroch in wind-swept glens. As the Jacobite air sighed through the

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room, a sheen of moisture filled the old man's eyes.

Tears for the tragedy of Scotland and the Stuart — from Mary, who had been led to the block, through the scholarly Jameses and the gallant Charleses down to that exiled king who had made a vain attempt in 1715 to drive the House of Hanover off the throne of Scotland and England.

That was the Old Pretender, whose standard had fallen at Sheriffmuir before the traitorous Duke of Argyll. And thirty years later, his son, the Young Pretender — Bonnie Prince Charlie, the King o' the Hielands — had suffered similar defeat before the charge of Cumberland's dragoons at Culloden. The Stuart cause was lost for all time, but — and the air Margaret was playing found echo in the soul of the sanguine dreamer —

Charlie will come again some day,  
Over the sea to Skye.

The song of the fiddle died. The gale besieged the gables with a vicious grin. Then silence, broken by the same gust of sound from



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the cobbled street. The schoolmaster started. He looked at Margaret, whose brown head was turned to one side, as if she sought to interpret an unusual sound in the night.

"They're running," she whispered. "Something must be wrong."

The house shuddered in the blast and the tin windmill whined in crescendo. The dominie's underlip stuck out and he wagged his head ominously as he arose. He passed through the "stewdy" door without a word and went to the front room of the house, Margaret following. The front room was damp and chilly. The pitch darkness of it hid the stuffed owl on the mantel and the framed certificates which adorned the walls in collusion with a print from "The Taming of the Shrew" and a framed portrait of Charles Edward Philip Casimir Stuart — the last of the Pretenders.

From the rain-spattered, flaw-blurred window the dominie and Margaret could see into the cobbled street. Dim figures, huddled in plaids and with shoulders bent against the up-rushing wind, were hurrying toward the shore

## THE SEA TAKES TOLL

at the foot of the hill. Beyond the gables of the schoolhouse across the street, they could see nothing but blackness. There was the seething caldron of the furious sea.

"Something will be wrong," muttered Dalglish, his face close to the pane of bull's-eyed glass. "I believe I will go myself —"

"Look!" exclaimed Margaret. But the dominie had seen it, too. There came a wet halo of flame out of the sea. It flickered a moment in uncertain vagueness, then abruptly went out.

"May God forgive us!" whispered Jamie Dalglish, awe-stricken. "There's a ship on the Antlers!"

Without another word, father and daughter rushed back to the "stewdy." The dominie donned a plaid and a spacious Highland bonnet.

"You bide in the house," said he to his daughter, almost ferociously. The tempest was in his veins. "Keep the kettle on the boil. There may be need of comfort before morning."

The Scotswoman that was Margaret obeyed. When he had gone she hurried to the kitchen

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and filled the kettle. With knitted brows she placed it on the blaze, then brought an armful of peat to re-enforce the kitchen and "stewdy" supply.

When woman's work was done for the present, she wrapped a shawl around her and went into the front room. For hours she sat shivering in the darkness with her face pressed close to the window-pane, watching the hurrying figures in the street, and seeing, with dramatic terror, the misty halo that sprang at intervals from the Antlers.

Jamie Dalgleish was beating his way down the street, his body leaning forward and his chin down in his plaid. The outstanding eyebrows were louring in the teeth of the gale. At times, the wind, suddenly veering, would all but fling the strong old man to the ground. But he would crouch against a house wall until it blew steady again. At other times, so terrific was the blast that he must turn his back on it, for the rushing air made a vacuum in his mouth, his nostrils, and his lungs.

Other figures passed or overtook him. He could identify none, so muffled was every man's

## THE SEA TAKES TOLL

face, until one stopped close to him and yelled at the top of his voice:

"Hay, dominie! A fearfu' night! Will it be the eequinocshuls?"

"Eequinocshuls!" scoffed the dominie, fighting for breath. He recognized the man as "Gangy" Beckett, the tavern-keeper. "Na. It's a plain storrum," he cried, in "Gangy's" own Lowland dialect. "An' it does na' leave a man breath to pronounce sic a word as 'eequinocshuls'!"

"Sandy McClung, the undertaker, says there's a boat on the Antlers!" shouted "Gangy." "Sandy 'll be lookin' for a job."

"Na, na!" protested the dominie, earnestly. "Ye shouldna speak evil, Gangy; nor listen to it. Sandy's a guid man. He's out o' bed like the rest o' us to lend a hand. Have the Maclartys drawn up the boats?"

They were by this time battling their way down the hill together, leaning heavily on the wind and talking with their hands over their mouths to avoid strangulation.

The boats had been drawn up the moment the Maclartys had looked at the sky and pro-

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nounced "a night of it." It was characteristic of Inverlachie, this drawing up of the boats. The craft were owned by a few fishermen; but such was the instinctive spirit of the five hundred souls who were engaged in other industries in the village, that the sea never growled unheeded. The sea was the hereditary enemy, and an inherited instinct banded men against it. When the wind whined in the night, fisherman, publican, clergy, and sinner turned uneasily in bed, and when the sea growled with a certain note, there was no thought of personal property or personal comfort. All sorts and conditions arose by accord and went to the shore to bear a hand to the boats.

James Dalgleish and "Gangy" Beckett found them all assembled. There were the Maclarty brothers, five of them, all so alike in face and dress that men spoke of each as "one of the Maclartys." And in the circle that surrounded these rugged priests and prophets of the sea were the villagers. There was Davie Blue, the blacksmith, who killed a mad ox in the street with one blow of a sledge

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hammer; there was Tom Wallace, the doctor, who liked to "remember the night *you* were born"; there was Sandy McClung, the carpenter and undertaker, who was something of a ventriloquist and whose great sorrow was that he made his living burying his best friends. And there was the minister, too — old Hugh Black, who, despite his years and gentle profession, turned out with the rest when the sea called.

Women were not scarce, either. They were all fisher-wives with the exception of a tall, robust, middle-aged woman, who stood apart from the throng. Janet Glen was a "queer body." Handsome? Ay. But men would have no "fash" with her. She was in league with the devil. Else why did she wander by the seashore in the mirk night and never speak unless spoken to, and little at that? She would just look past you with that blank, yet far-seeing, stare of hers.

But nobody minded Janet to-night. All eyes were turned to the spot in the darkness where familiarity placed the Antlers — the grotesque rocky fangs that were always visible, but arose

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like the head of a swimming deer when the tide was low. At intervals a misty halo sprang from the west Antler, and sometimes, when the spray parted, the fierce-eyed, dripping-faced spectators could see the outlines of masts and spars lying aslant. At each successive flare it seemed that the slant was more pronounced. The ship was breaking up.

"It's the Lord's will," said the old minister. He did not pray. His religion was very practical. If man could not help, it was the Lord's prerogative.

And man could do nothing. The five stalwart Maclarty brothers stood in a silent group, a little nearer the thundering tonnage of seas than the others. If man could do anything, the Maclartys were the men to do it. But the sea was master to-night.

By and by the flare came no more from the Antlers. Every man and woman knew what was going on out there in the furious wolf-pack of the seas. Men were still clinging to shattered timbers. One by one their half-frozen hands were relaxing, or being torn loose by a mighty wave which beat them upon the

## THE SEA TAKES TOLL

rocks and dragged them down—down!—down! while the wolf-pack screamed and yelled, fought among themselves, frothed at the mouth and raved in sea-madness.

The sea was taking toll. The watchers knew it—knew that every second was fraught with human agony out there. And all through the night, priest, scholar, and commoner stood by and waited for the dawn that was to bring the seeming fulfillment of a prophecy.



## CHAPTER II

### THE SEA GIVES UP —

**I**T was "one of the Maclartys" who saw him first. The Maclarty suddenly broke away from the grim throng that had been watching the dreary spread of dawn-light. He uttered an exclamation in Gaelic and dashed down the sea-saucered beach to the edge of the ocean. Here he swung on his heels, watching his chance to cheat the great, curling billows that spread their talons and, failing to catch anything, drew up their shoulders for another spring.

The onlookers then saw what the Maclarty had seen. On the back of a wave was the form of a man — a body being flung loosely by the resistless waters. For a moment it seemed as if an arm was raised in an attempt to do battle with the sea, but that may have been another trick of the devilish ocean, which loves to make its dead simulate life.

## THE SEA GIVES UP —

The great wave lifted the body high and flung it into the backwash with sickening violence. The Maclarty made a dash into the whirl of outrushing foam, but his keen eye saw that it would avail nothing this time. He leaped back quickly, stepping high and lightly that the undertow might not grip him. Again the wave shrugged its mighty shoulders with the almost thinking intent of beating the life out of its victim.

Again the roar of descending water. The Maclarty rushed into the surf while it was still rushing inward. A shout went up from the throng. The Maclarty had the body in his arms and was taking advantage of the uprushing sea to gain a yard or two toward safety. But then began the deadly backwash. The Maclarty leaned shoreward with the body in his arms and his powerful legs delving deep into the dragging sand and gravel. It was a battle between the sea and the man of the sea. It was a tug of war between force and cunning, sea-force and sea-cunning. The Maclarty gained a step. Then his legs slipped in the shifting gravel and he stumbled.

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He was on his feet again; the shimmering, moving foam dazzled his eyes; and he had lost three yards. The slack came between the waves. He lifted the body in his powerful arms and plunged shoreward. But the wave had *seen* him. It gathered itself with seeming greater rapidity and fury and struck at him from behind. Down went the Maclarty and his burden, just as it seemed he had made safe footing. Down they went together, the wave and the burdened man. There was a snarling turmoil, a mass of arms and legs struggling in a snowlike whirlpool; then the tentacles of the sea sucked the man and his stolen prize back — back! — into the great sea-maw.

The onlookers — such as could not help — saw the smooth, concave wall of water curve greenly to a great height. They saw, like objects embedded in ice, the two bodies in the gray-green volume. Then tons of water thundered the Maclarty and the thing he tried to save on the water-worn stones. One could almost feel the sickening blow!

But the Maclarty was not done. He was unable to rise as the more powerful sea clutched

## THE SEA GIVES UP —

and dragged him. But he still held to the human wreckage with one arm and with the other he waved to the shore. Then again he was drawn into the concave deluge.

The other Maclartys had not been idle from the first moment. They had seen the thing a second after their brother's Gaelic exclamation. They would have done what he had done, but he had done it first. They knew what would happen — just what was happening now. They had rushed to a beach locker in which they kept thole-pins, fishing tackle, net-yarn, needles, and other nautical equipment. In a few seconds they had extracted a rope. Another of the Maclartys ran down the steep, shelving beach, coiling the rope for a cast. Behind him trotted the long-limbed three brothers, ready to bear a hand on the rope when the cast was made. The five Maclarty brothers were in action. They were all alike, save that one was in the sea, and another, on the beach, had a rope in his hand. The other three stood behind in a line, each in the same tense attitude, each silent and mechanical.

The third time the wave pitched the first

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brother and his wreckage into the swirl, the second brother, who had been gauging the wave with his eye and swinging the coil of rope like a lasso, flung the line out, over and beyond the two figures in the foam. A hand reached out of the sea, clutched at the rope and missed — clutched again — again! — while the undertow dragged mercilessly.

Just as the backwash seemed to have drawn him beyond the rope's end, the hemp tightened. The Maclartys on shore gave a simultaneous crow and bore on the rope. They did not bring it up sharp and taut. The powerful sea tugging against a shore drag would mean the parting of their brother's hold. They ran out with the sea, and, just as the wave flung viciously at them, bearing the two helpless figures, the four brothers cried "*O-hay!*" and ran backward, hauling the rope with them.

The sea was tricked. They had used its own power to effect their purpose. The inrush of water and the haul of the rope brought the Maclarty and his white-faced wreckage high up in the surf.

But it was not over yet. The sea, seeming

## THE SEA GIVES UP —

conscious of the trick the men of the sea had played, drew back its talons with a clutching, frenzied grabbing of stones, wrack, and men. But the second Maclarty had passed hand over hand down the rope. His arm was upon his brother and his strength was aiding him shoreward with his burden, while the three men on terra firma hauled and hauled with many a guttural "*O-hay!*" The backwash slacked as the sea crouched for a final spring at them.

But the men of the sea had conquered.

The rope fell on the shore and lay like a listless snake. Just above the sea's reach lay two figures, one silent and huddled, the other — the Maclarty — flat on his back, blowing stertorously through a wide-open mouth. The four brothers spoke to him in Gaelic, but he merely blew like a whale and waved them off. Nevertheless, they dragged him by the shoulders up the beach and planted him against the locker.

There the Maclarty blew and snorted and retched the salt water from his stomach and lungs, while his four brothers brought up the cause of it all, carrying him by the feet and shoulders.

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"Maclarty's all right," said Tom Wallace, the doctor. "This other man's dead, or near it. Stand away, folks. Hay, dominie, have them take the Maclarty to your house. He will need a dram."

"Ay, ay!" said the schoolmaster. "Margaret has the kettle on the boil this minute. Come on, lads. Bear a hand."

"And some of ye bear a hand here!" cried Wallace, rising from the inanimate figure which the Maclartys had brought from the sea. "This man's got life in him. Dominie, we'll turn your house into a hospital and make Margaret nurse. Hurry, m' lads!"

"Ay, ay!" cried the dominie from a little distance. "I'll run ahead. Bring the whole crew if they come ashore alive."

"Sandy'll tak' care o' the deid yins," said "Gangy" Beckett to Davie Blue, within carefully-gaged hearing of the undertaker-carpenter. The undertaker's face never moved, nor did he look in the publican's direction, but a sepulchral voice whispered close to "Gangy" Beckett's ear:

*"Bad whuskey killed me!"*

## THE SEA GIVES UP—

“Gangy” started and turned pale. With a vicious glance in the undertaker’s direction, he grumbled to Davie:

“He will be thinkin’ that’s a joke. Ah ca’ it a perverrrsion o’ a God-geeven talent!”

The schoolmaster presently burst into the square, whitewashed house on the hill. Margaret was pale and weary-eyed, but she was eager to hear the news and to be of service. A glance at her father’s face told of service required.

“Good, lass!” he exclaimed, as he noted the coziness of the “stewdy” and heard the simmering of the kettle in the kitchen. “They’re bringing the Maclarty here. The brave man risked his life to — ay, they’re bringing another. That’ll be two we must do for. There was a ship wrecked on the Antlers, and — ”

The warmth of the house suddenly brought wisps of steam from the dominie’s clothing. Margaret seized upon her father at once.

“Well, you first!” she interrupted practically. “Off wi’ that plaid — off with everything and into dry clothes or I’ll bar the door against the whole *five* Maclartys.”



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"Ay, ay. That's sensible," admitted Jamie Dalgleish. "I'll change in the 'stewdy.' Send the Maclarty in here and put the stranger in the kitchen bed. And ye might brew a toddy, lass. There's a medeecinal drop on the top shelf. The doctor'll want it. It's been a dour night, but it's about blawn itself out by now. The whole town was out —"

The rest was cut off as Margaret shut the "stewdy" door and ran into the kitchen. The first thing she did was to whisk the crazy quilt off the bed, which was set, Scots fashion, in the wall. Then she turned down the blankets and sheets ready for the coming tenant.

"It's a good thing they've been aired," she thought, with housewifely satisfaction.

Presently there was a knocking at the door. Doctor Wallace was the first to enter. He gave a cheery good-morning and chucked Margaret under the chin. Behind him came British Will, the bill-poster town-crier, and Hughie Gibson, the shoemaker, supporting "one of the Maclartys." The party went into the "stewdy" and shut the door. A minute later Margaret tripped down the lobby with a jug

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of steaming toddy. It was received through the door, which was opened half a foot, and Wallace's voice said:

"There's a good lass!"

Again there came a tapping at the door. This time Davie Blue, Sandy McClung, and "Gangy" Beckett ushered in the inanimate stranger.

Margaret gave one glance at the pale face. Woman's curiosity held her for a moment. Then woman's love of the handsome in the opposite sex held her a moment longer. She had never seen a face like this. He was not a Scot in feature—at least, he was no ordinary Scot. The nose, the fine nostrils, the high, smooth brow, the long brown lashes, the little mustache and the hairy beetle of the underlip were very foreign. In that instant she fervently prayed that he might not die. She would like to hear him—*speak!*

"Come right ben the house to the kitchen," she said. "The bed's ready and the doctor's here."

She showed the way to the kitchen, indicated the bed and went out. This was men's

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work. All a woman could do was to sit patiently and await the commands of the men. She was a lonely little figure as she stood in the lobby between the "stewdy" door and the kitchen door, but she was the embodiment of that which is beautiful in a woman — her patience, her submission, her anxiety to serve when called upon.

At the end of the hall was the open door of the "front" room. Into this she aimlessly wandered, but with her ears strained to catch the first summons. She looked blankly through the bull's-eyed glass panes into the cobbled street. It was now full day and the fury of the storm was over. It was still blowing hard, but the rain had ceased. She noticed regretfully that the weather-cock on the top of the schoolhouse had been twisted askew, but the tin cock was still pointing to the southwest.

She wondered what they were doing in the kitchen. Would they put him to bed? No, they would hardly do that if he were dead. Was he dead? The pale, beautiful, refined face came before her mind's eye. She looked blankly at the wall before her. He had looked

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—*very* dead. Oh, if he had only lived long enough for her to hear him speak! He would have spoken in the manner of his face. That was the only way she could think of it.

She tried to picture his face as it would be when he was speaking — with color in it, animated, haughty at times, gentle at others, and again moved by depths of great feeling —

What was she thinking about? She seemed to know this man, to have heard him speak, to have seen that lordly arching of the brows and the twitching of the delicate nostrils, to —

She had been staring at the wall. All at once she understood, and the understanding brought a thrill of dramatic terror. She had been staring up at the picture of Charles Edward Philip Casimir Stuart — Prince Charlie! The Young Pretender was looking down at her, and there was something about the princely visage that recalled the man in the kitchen. She had seen that real face for only a moment. In building it up in living imagination she had unconsciously dressed the stranger in Prince Charlie's clothes and ani-

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mated his features with the expression of the picture on the wall.

She clasped her hands and stared at Prince Charlie's picture. Oh, if it had been twenty-five years before, this might be the well-beloved prince. But this was 1812 and Bonnie Prince Charlie had been dead twenty-five years. If only it were possible that dreams could come true, or time go backward! Then, indeed, this would be the Charlie whom she had so often resurrected when her father told her tales by the "stewdy" fire. Many a time she had courtesied before this picture and "made believe" that he, "wha's hame should be a palace," was indeed in that palace, and that she, little Margaret Dalgleish, was grown up and making her bow to Bonnie Prince Charlie, the King o' the Hielands! Many a time she had played that she was Flora Macdonald, loving her prince with no hope of return other than the world's censure; faithfully following him, outcast, through moors and caves and storms, helping him to escape the redcoats — her bonnie Prince Charlie!

A step sounded in the lobby. It was Dr.

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Wallace—Tom Wallace, the big-hearted, smiling, overgrown lad, who, like her own father, James Dalgleish, had only his lass, Peggy, to cheer his loneliness in the world. But Wallace was born cheery. He loved humanity, especially the small collection of it in Inverlachie, and he had a way of laughing that half cured a sick body the moment he came to the bedside.

“Hay, Margaret!” he cried down the lobby. “Ye will have to sleep on a shakedown, I’m thinking. We’ve put the stranger in your bed. That alone should cure him. He’s doing well and should be about in a day or two. He’ll like his nurse, but mind he doesna fall in love with her, or—you with him! Now, let’s have another look at the Maclarty.”

Just then the door of the “stewdy” opened. The Maclarty appeared, his clothes steaming, but apparently otherwise none the worse. The schoolmaster was trying to detain him, but the Maclarty, greatly embarrassed at so much attention, was protesting in jerky Gaelic.

“No! I will *not*! I will *not* remain,” he was saying, with his head averted and his

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hand raised. "I will be catching cold if I remain in this warm house. The Maclartys will be waiting. I must go!"

Indeed the Maclartys were waiting—all four of them—in a silent row in the cobbled street. They had not been *asked* to enter! They did not altogether approve of this summary removal of one of their number. But they had been very busy at the time. They had inquired as to their missing brother. Presently he emerged from the dominie's house. From the window Margaret saw all four give a short nod. Then all five mingled and marched up the street, so ridiculously like one another in face, stature and dress that she could not have told which "one of the Maclartys" had been in the "stewdy" a minute before.

Margaret was now free to enter the "stewdy," which she did. It was in a fine mess after the men, so she busied herself tidying up and spreading her father's clothes before the fire to dry. James Dalgleish had gone into the kitchen to have a look at his remaining guest. He had been so busy on the beach

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with the Maclarty that he had not even had a glimpse of the stranger's face.

He came to the foot of the bed. The others made room for the dominie, who, besides being in his own house, was a man who commanded respect in Inverlachie. Besides Sandy McClung and "Gangy" Beckett and the doctor, there were three others in the room — Davie Blue, the blacksmith, Hughie Gibson, the shoemaker, and British Will, the town-crier. Those worthies, having discharged their obligations to the dominie and the Maclarty, had come into the kitchen to gratify their curiosity.

The man on the bed was very white and very still, but he was breathing lightly and steadily, and there was a touch of color in his cheeks. Deprived of his bedraggled garments and with his face dried, he looked handsomer and more distinguished than ever.

"He looks like somebody in the world," said the doctor musingly. "He may have been well worth the saving. He was n't more than half-drowned. If he had died, it would have been from exhaustion. He must have been swimming for hours and the breakers



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did for him. That Maclarty — that was a sight for anybody who thinks there are no *men* left in Scotland!”

Davie Blue, the blacksmith, grunted. Sandy McClung wagged his head approvingly at Hughie Gibson. But “Gangy” Beckett suddenly nudged British Will and winked in the direction of the dominie. The schoolmaster was behaving queerly. He had not uttered a word since he entered the kitchen. He just walked to the foot of the bed and stood there, looking at the face on the pillow. All at once, while the doctor was speaking, Jamie Dalgleish’s face took on a look of utter stupidity. Then he grew pale. His mouth and eyebrows twitched and his tense blue orbs suddenly blazed with an almost fanatic light. “Gangy” Beckett desperately nudged British Will, the town-crier.

“Guid help us!” he whispered. “What’s gaen gyte wi’ the dominie?”

“Wallace!” Dalgleish spoke hardily above a whisper, yet every one in the room started at the sound. “Come ben the house with me a minute.”

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The doctor had seen the look the moment the dominie spoke. He followed Dalglish quickly, fearing him ill. The schoolmaster led the way into the front room. There he turned upon the doctor the face of a man who has had a visitation of the spirit. He clutched Wallace by the arms in a way that made the doctor wince.

“Tom Wallace!” he gasped. “Who is yon man in the kitchen?”

“How should I know?” said Wallace cautiously, gently disengaging himself from the frenzied grip.

Dalglish was trembling like a man about to be stricken with a fit. He stepped back from the doctor and suddenly shot an arm and forefinger at the picture on the wall.

“*Look!*” he whispered. And that was all.

For a minute Wallace stared at the picture of Prince Charlie. Then he came back to earth and remembered his dates.

“That is very, *very* queer,” said he slowly. “But that is all it can be. You see, the mustache and the little beard—”

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"Doctor!" cried Sandy McClung from the kitchen door. "Quick! He's comin' to."

In another moment both Wallace and the dominie were in the kitchen. The eyelids of the man were flickering, and he was swallowing gently. Presently a pair of brown eyes looked up hazily. The doctor put a hand on the sick man's and clasped it tightly. He was preparing to assure the patient of his well-being. But the dominie was acting like an insane man. He pushed the doctor aside and said to the reviving man, clearly and crisply:

"Tell me! What is your name?"

The thing was done before the doctor could prevent it. Wallace awaited the answer, only with less eagerness than the dominie, less curiosity than "Gangy" and the others. The man on the bed breathed deeply once or twice. Then, with an effort, he spoke faintly:

"My name — Charles Ed-ward —"

That was all. He lapsed into natural sleep.

## CHAPTER III

### MYSTERY IN INVERLACHIE

**T**HE seven men in the kitchen were staring at one another, or at the face on the bed, when the spell of surprise was deepened by an unexpected apparition. The kitchen door suddenly opened and in came that strange woman, Janet Glen.

Whatever men might say of her, there was no denying that the woman was handsome and desirable. She had a small, slightly uplifted head, set upon shoulders that were massive in a womanly way. Her stature was almost Junoësqe, her hair and complexion dark, her hands small, and her features good. But whatever her attractions were, there might also be foundation for the fear in which men held her, even when desiring her most. A pair of deep-set, far-away eyes looked out with that expression which is peculiar to reverie.

Coming as she did upon the heels of the

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stranger's declaration of his name — at least, part of it — the woman brought a superstitious thrill into the room with her. Even the doctor looked uneasy, although he was the only man in the village who had a kind word to say to, or of, Janet Glen, and the only one to whom the silent woman ever spoke more than a civil greeting as she went her lonely way.

“Rubbish!” the doctor would say, when he heard gossip about Janet Glen's dealings with the dark one. “All that woman hankers after is children!” Janet had been married at one time, but her husband had disappeared mysteriously. Since when she had kept much to herself.

For a moment the woman stood in the doorway, more like a sleep-walker than a naturally conscious person. She was in what the villagers called “one of her spells.” She advanced slowly into the kitchen. The men made way for her when they saw that she was making for the bed and that her eyes were fixed upon the stranger. She came and stood in the place where Dalgleish had looked and been staggered in the looking.

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But there was a different expression on Janet's face when she saw the stranger's. It was an expression of gladness, of disappointment, of relief, of hope again deferred. She turned and, still without speaking, walked out of the house.

"Imphm!" grunted Sandy McClung, with a sigh of relief.

"Eh-hay!" said "Gangy" Beckett significantly.

"Fiddlesticks!" snorted the doctor. He was upset himself by the incident and was angry that he showed it.

The dominie said nothing. He was still glowering at the face of the stranger and he did not appear to be conscious that Janet Glen had ever been in the kitchen.

Five minutes later Doctor Wallace left the patient and started for his own home, where his own lass, Peggy, should be pouring the porridge about now. The doctor's cottage was on the other side of the village, in the valley behind the hill that faced the sea. It was a nice cottage with a flower-garden in front and a kailyard behind. It was the month of Sep-

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tember, quite early for storms, and the doctor was thinking of what the wind must have done to his garden.

But he was also thinking of other things besides flowers and kail. He felt both amused and amazed at some of the morning's events. The matter of the ship coming on the reefs and the salvation of but one man were merely incidents on this wild, west coast, but — the man himself! It was, of course, very absurd about Dalglish and his excitement over a chance resemblance between a half-dead man and Prince Charlie. Yet — the man was startlingly like the Prince in the picture. Wallace, being a man of education and of an inquiring turn of mind, found it interesting to dissect the incident. In his own veins was the blood of one of Scotland's heroes — Wallace! — and he could understand his own emotion when the likeness was brought to his notice with such startling abruptness. He could understand, too, how easily a suggestion of this nature, capped with the statement of the half-conscious man that his name was "Charles Edward —" would fire the old Jacobite blood in Dalglish.

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Jamie always had been a maniac on the subject of the Stuarts and the glory of Scotland and the pride of race.

Well, — Jamie was not the only one. There were some eminently sane Scotsmen who could no more restrain a kind of berserk fury at the mention of the last rebellion than they could restrain their tears at a reading of Burns's "Auld Lang Syne." Wallace, himself, could keep his feelings under a mask of cheery professional sameness, but he could quite understand why Jamie Dalgleish sometimes choked and burst into furious scalding tears when he was reading Bruce's address at Bannockburn to a gathering of "the Clan" — Inverlachie's "literary" circle.

Yes, he could understand it. It was the call of the blood — the old, berserk, Jacobite blood which would run hot till the crack of doom. It was in the doctor's own veins, and the doctor knew it. As he walked home he found himself humming a tune which had come into his head by a chain of association —

Charlie will come again some day,  
Over the sea to Skye!



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Charlie would come again! How absurd! Yet what a dear tradition it was — for a tradition it had almost become after twenty-five years. Charlie was dead — died drunk, they said, in Rome. Poor Charlie! — “wha’s hame should be a palace.” Wallace found himself wishing that the stranger in the kitchen bed at Dalgleish’s *were* Prince Charlie. Would he fight for him? The question came instantly, naturally. And as instantly and naturally instinct flashed back the emphatic answer — “Ay, by Heaven! —” And then he called himself a fool.

Ah, yes. The blood would not down. Charlie was to the Jacobite what a messiah was to the religious fanatic. Any faker might come along and play with the fire of that blood and, if he did not burn his fingers in the blaze of it, the Highlanders would follow him as dogs follow their master. If it went far enough they would not want to be undeceived. Any excuse to let loose their feelings on their pet mania!

But what had all this to do with the stranger in Dalgleish’s kitchen bed? Nothing at all.

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'As soon as the man was himself again, himself would dispel Dalgleish's crazy delusion. Nothing else would. Even the fact that Charles Edward Philip Casimir Stuart had been dead twenty-five years would carry no weight. Charlie was immortal! Charlie would come again some day!

The doctor suddenly looked up. He was conscious that eyes were fixed intently upon him. He was passing the little cottage where Janet Glen lived, and Janet herself was standing at the door, gazing at him with those flickerless orbs of hers.

"Soft," said he. It was the peculiar Scots greeting of a wet day.

"But fair after the night," said Janet. There was a softness, as of weariness, in her speech.

The doctor stood still and surveyed her with a professional, but kindly, eye.

"Janet Glen," said he, "why do you stand out in the rain when there's shelter two feet back of you? Get in!"

She smiled slightly and stepped back into the doorway. He stood laughing at her for

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a few moments. Then, with a more decided smile, Janet said:

"I might say the same to you, Doctor. Will you come in, or —?"

"Thanks," said he, "but —"

He suddenly changed his mind and went in. Janet pointed to a chair near the fire. The doctor seldom had occasion to visit Janet. She was notoriously healthy, despite her careless outings. But when he dropped in for a social minute — as he did with everybody in the village at least twice a year — he never failed to notice the scrupulous tidiness of Janet's house. This was absolutely at variance with one story he had heard of Janet's past.

Years ago — before Wallace came to Inverlachie — rumor said that Janet had a husband. Janet's husband was a "gentleman," in the narrow sense of the word. He knew exactly how to hand teacups and he could paint pictures.

Janet was the belle of the town. They married. What happened after that, nobody knew, although everybody made a different guess. One thing upon which all were agreed

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was that marriage was not all the poetic painter had painted in his wooing. It was also agreed that he had faults, that he took to drink and that Janet Glen knew no more about scrubbing a floor or darning a pair of socks than "a hen kens aboot makkin' scones."

The husband disappeared; and then began Janet's queerness. Perhaps it was pride that kept her away from her former village friends. Perhaps her head became turned. Perhaps, indeed, it was true that she learned the black art and was in league with the devil. In any event the husband disappeared. If he died, he was as mysteriously buried as Moses. If he just picked himself up and left Janet — no wonder! She was a feckless body when it came to housekeeping. Which, Doctor Wallace knew from actual observation of Janet's tidiness, was libel.

"Janet," said he, "I'm going to ask you a question."

The deep brown eyes surveyed him quietly and with just a touch of wonder.

"Why," said Wallace, "did you walk into that kitchen, look at that man and walk out?"

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It was the first time he had ever touched upon Janet's peculiarities of behavior. For a moment she almost stared at him, her face expressing amazement, pain, and a suggestion of rising anger.

"I thought he might be somebody I knew," she answered, simply.

"Whom did you think he might be?"

"There was a familiar cast to his face," she said, looking steadily at the doctor, but no longer with any expression of countenance. It was as if she spoke in her sleep.

"Oh, you had seen him before, then?"

"No — yes."

"Did you expect somebody?"

"Doctor," she said, and her tone was equivalent to the wakeful expression of the sleeper who suddenly opens eyes to consciousness, "I have been expecting somebody for — for years."

"Is yon the — the somebody?"

"No."

"Who is the somebody, Janet? Come! Confession is good for the soul."

"Is it? — No, I cannot tell you."

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"Well, I won't ask questions, Janet. But — do you know that man at Dalgleish's?"

"No. . . . Yes. . . . I don't know. I thought I did, but . . . I don't know, doctor. I don't understand something. Please don't speak like this to me. How is Peggy?"

"Peggy?" the doctor echoed. His face clouded slightly. He was about to give the usual reply, with thanks for inquiries, when he became aware that Janet's eyes were bent steadily upon him. He spoke of that which was very near to his heart, and wondered why he spoke of it — to this woman.

"She seems all right," said he, absently. "Yet she is n't all right, Janet. She's quiet and dreamy, sort of. If she was not my own lass I would diagnose it as a case of love's melancholia. Has she been to see you, Janet?"

"'Deed, yes. She and Daft Willie are all my visitors. I did notice that she was ailing in her mind, Doctor."

"I wonder —"

"Tom Wallace," said Janet Glen, looking

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into the fire, "there are times in a woman's life when she's apt to be quiet."

He faced her quickly. But Janet was still looking quietly into the fire, and she added:

"At such times it's best for a man to leave a woman alone. She has her own sex to confide in, if need be."

Wallace laughed and rose to go. He thought he understood. It was one of those feminine mysteries to which men must shut their eyes and ears. Well—she had a good friend in Janet. Dr. Tom Wallace left the cottage with a greater opinion of Janet. In league with the devil? Rubbish! Fiddlesticks! If he were not a widower with a grown-up lass, and if he were the marrying kind—well?—Fiddlesticks!

But he wondered still why she had gone to the Dalgleish's and why she had been so eager to see the man on the bed. He wondered whom she had hoped to see, and what she meant by hovering between yes and no about her knowledge of the stranger's identity. One thing was certain: he was not the man Janet hoped to see.

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"Doctor," said Janet at the door, and her tone was in tune with her almost perfunctory "good-morning," "look out for redcoats. They never brought any joy to Scotland."

He spun around with a tightening sensation at his heart. Look out for redcoats? What did she mean?—and about Peggy? Wallace had noticed the attentions of Kilby, the captain at Fort James, to Peggy Wallace. But Wallace liked Kilby, even if he *was* an Englishman—a frank, good-hearted, honest soldier; and a gentleman, too.

"You mean—look out for Kilby?" said the doctor.

"I mean nothing of the sort," said Janet, looking at the wet hedge that bordered the street. "Kilby is a good lad and Peggy might marry worse. But"—she smiled faintly—"is n't a man of your blood afraid of English redcoats?"

"Ay—as redcoats, though not afraid of them. Many a red coat covers a red heart."

"As many a black coat covers a black one," said Janet, with a little laugh. "Run along, Doctor. Your porridge will be cold."



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The doctor had but a little way to go to his own cottage. But as one dreams a voyage through space in a second, so he turned over the whole matter while he traversed a hundred yards.

Out of a confusion of thought came the realization that Captain George Kilby was a-fancying Peggy. Well, why not? Peggy was a sweet lass and she was good enough for any redcoat, captain or colonel. And Kilby was a good lad. Wallace instinctively knew his man. There was nothing to fear about George Kilby. If it had been that major with the bad eye — Fitzwilliam; well — There was a time, before Fitzwilliam was transferred to another fort, when Wallace had been uneasy about the man's attentions to Peggy. He would have hinted to the major that he had better keep off, but the Fate ground out by governmental mills had saved him the unpleasant task.

Peggy had been mighty quiet since Kilby came to take Fitzwilliam's place. Imphm! It looked as if Peggy was herself fancying the young captain. Things might be a great

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deal worse. On the whole, Tom Wallace saw no reason to be dissatisfied. Kilby was a nice lad.

"Doctor!" hailed a voice. "There's a scarcity of flowers in your garden this wet weather."

Glancing up, the doctor saw the young man of his thoughts — Kilby — wearing a military cloak and mounted on a good horse which was pawing and restlessly dancing about the road in front of the doctor's cottage. Wallace was about to say that the gale had played havoc with the flowers when he perceived the point of the young soldier's remark and the wherefore of the prancing horse in front of the cottage. He smiled openly.

"I'm thinking the flowers are all in the kitchen, baking scones or keeping my porridge warm," said he.

Kilby laughed and passed the time of day. Wallace told him of some of the events of the night and, in serio-comic fashion, of the landing of "Prince Charlie."

"Well," said Kilby, with mock ferocity, "if he's a Stuart of the blood, as a soldier

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of his Majesty it will be my solemn duty to apprehend him!"

"Solemn?"

Kilby laughed. With a last vain glance at the cottage, he saluted and rode on.

The doctor paused with his hand on the gate latch. A nice lad, this Kilby, and—Peggy's too coy!

"Captain!" he called on the impulse. "Have you ever heard Davie Blue recite 'Scots Wha Hae'?"

"No," said Kilby, reining.

"Well, come to-morrow night to the gathering of the Clan—that's our literary society, Dalgleish, the dominie, 's chairman. You'll enjoy yourself, I'll wager. Call for me if you like. I fancy we can stand sponsor for a lone redcoat."

"Thanks! That's good of you!" Kilby cried exuberantly. He saluted and rode down the road at a spirited canter.

A minute later Doctor Wallace entered the kitchen of his home and framed Peggy's quiet face between his hands. He kissed her playfully on the lips, than looked down into

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a pair of hazel eyes, his own twinkling knowingly.

But the twinkle passed away as he became aware of the deep sadness, the sudden womanliness of the eyes that looked up into his. What had come over Peggy? Fiddlesticks! She was in love. As Janet said, there were times when it was best to leave a woman alone. Kilby was the lucky man! But all at once the eyes which had been looking up into his filled with tears — vainly suppressed tears. Peggy slowly lowered her head before her father's gaze until her face was buried on his shoulder. Then her shoulders shook and he heard the sobbing of his little lass.

"Tut, tut!" said he, playfully.

But here was something that was beyond his professional understanding and just enough within his intuition to make him uncomfortable.

## CHAPTER IV

### OF A CERTAIN PERSONAGE

**I**N the kitchen of the square, whitewashed house on the hill, Margaret Dalgleish was paring potatoes. Her knife was skimming around the "brownies" with mechanical precision. An occasional little splash in a pail of water told of another ready for the pot.

Margaret was in a state of mental exaltation. She had inherited some of her father's imagination, and by the time her "prince" had been moved to more comfortable quarters in the "stewdy," the girl had built palaces for him, and she herself had made her bow before his throne. It was a pleasant dream — while she pared potatoes!

The stranger still slept, and mystery still brooded over him. At least so it seemed to Jamie Dalgleish, who prowled nervously about

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the "stewdy," awaiting the sleeper's awakening. Occasionally he would pause and peer into the quiet face.

Who was this man? Could he be a Stuart? It was not impossible. The dominie reviewed the whole history of the hapless house as he knew it. After the '45 Charlie escaped to France. He lived a dissolute life there. Dalgleish, who knew the Scot's temperament, deplored its weakness while he sympathized. You see, there was the Polish blood in Charlie's veins, got from the Old Pretender's wife, who was a daughter of John Sobieski, King of Poland. It would be hard for a man, who suffered as Charlie did, to stand strong and in stern self-control against bitter disappointment and the call of his mixed blood.

But could there have been a son? No! The Highlanders would have known. They knew there was no issue of Charlie's marriage with the Countess of Albany, the marriage which terminated in separation. There was Miss Walkenshaw, Charlie's faithful mistress. But that was a daughter, not a son, and the

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daughter had been with him when he died at Rome in 1788. No, it could hardly be that this man, who was so like the prince, was a son. The birth of a truly royal heir to the crown of England and Scotland would have been noised abroad, particularly among the ever-hopeful Jacobites. The word would have passed from lip to ear like a magic "sesame" to dreams of the future.

All at once James Dalglish stopped in his noiseless promenade of the "stewdy." A ray of understanding had flashed from some remote corner of his brain—his storehouse of facts. There was a brother of Prince Charlie, and this brother had been rightful King of Scotland and England after Charlie's death!

The Old Pretender had two sons, Charles Edward and Henry Benedict. Little was heard of Henry, save that for his relationship he was elevated to the purple by his holy namesake, Pope Benedict XIV. That was in 1747, when Henry left England—which was no place for a Stuart!—and went to Rome. He was called Cardinal York. And when

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Charlie died in Rome did not this cardinal brother assume regal style and call himself Henry IX, King of England?

What became of him? Dalglish remembered bit by bit. The expulsion of Pius VI from Rome and other events following the convulsions of France drove the self-styled king to Venice. King George, out of pity, settled four thousand pounds per annum upon the unfortunate man, who had been penniless and growing old.

He died. He had been dead only five years. He was eighty-two when he died. This man on the bed was about thirty, or perhaps he was thirty-five. Might he not be a son of Henry? Such a likeness could only be accounted for by blood relationship. And then there was the name — Charles Edward!

By this time Dalglish had worked himself into a fury of eagerness to prove his surmises correct. Already, without being conscious of it, the dominie was overwhelmed with conviction, or rather a determination to be convinced in the face of whatever contrary facts might arise. He could hardly restrain his eagerness



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to wake the man on the bed and pour into his ears a volley of questions and a string of assertions that would leave him no chance of denying his identity.

But the man slept on. Dalgleish tried to turn his racing thoughts to some diversion. The stranger's clothing hung on a wooden clothes-horse before the fire. The dominie curiously eyed their rich texture. They were French in make and style. They favored the court of Napoleon. At present they were steaming, and giving off the stuffy odor of drying cloth and evaporating sea water.

All at once Dalgleish remembered that the pockets had not been searched. There might be articles which would require delicate treatment to save them from destruction. There might be papers, soaked with sea water, which should be spread to dry.

He felt a little ashamed of the eagerness with which he ran his hands over the garments. He found a few little things which he set near the fire. Then his hand encountered paper, damp and soft. He carefully withdrew his hand and a packet of blurred

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letters. Before he realized what he was doing he was staring at the uppermost.

Dalgleish started. He suddenly put the letters away from him. Next moment he was walking up and down, more nervously than ever, trying to drive from his mind the thing that involuntary glance had revealed to him.

He had not meant to look — to pry into the man's private affairs; but what he had seen had such a bearing upon — upon this man's identity, and it so explained his presence in Scotland that the dominie began to shake with triumph. He was right! He was right! This man —

But what had he seen? He stopped on the rag mat and tried to control his imagination. The deed was done — inadvertently, he tried to assure himself. He had seen. Whether it was right or not, he might as well look straight at the knowledge which had suddenly become his. What had he seen?

Upon that uppermost folded page of the packet of letters he had seen a number of half-blurred lines, written in the French language. The dominie regretted, while he was

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conscientiously glad, that he was no great French scholar. But he had seen several words which he could not help translating into "Jacobites" and "Charles Edward"!

And that was all he needed when the words were written by a personage who signed his name in one word. That name was imprinted on his mind's eye so strongly that, wherever he looked about the "stewdy" — on the walls, on the bed, on the floor, in the fire — he saw it in large, clear letters:

### NAPOLÉON.

It was about seven in the evening when the man began to stir from his long, deep sleep.

Margaret and the dominie had been seated, one on each side of the fire, in silence. At the first sign of returning consciousness on the part of the stranger, Jamie Dalgleish, who had been furtively, impatiently, watching and waiting, waved his lass from the room. Margaret obediently retired to the kitchen, but not without a curious backward glance at the awakening "prince."

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For a few minutes there was silence in the "stewdy." The man was wide awake, looking up at the grizzled, hewn face that bent over him. He expressed no surprise; indeed, he seemed to have a perfect understanding of his situation. He had cast his mind back to the storm and to the driving ship, the shudder as she struck the Antlers, the breaking up of her timbers and his own plunge into the roaring seas. For the rest — apparently he had been saved by watchers on that shore which he had striven to reach. And now he was in the cottage of one of the Scots.

"I seem to have fallen into kind hands," said he quietly.

"Deed, ay," said the dominie, his voice quivering with eagerness. "And glad am I to see you yourself again. May I ask whence ye came?"

"I was coming to Scotland from France," said the stranger simply. "The rest you know. I thank you —"

"From France, eh?" said the dominie. "Did you live a long time in France? Were

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you born there? Did you — But one question at a time."

"Yes, I have lived in France some years. But I was not born there."

"Did you — did you, by any chance —" The schoolmaster was talking slowly and carefully against his desire to put the question bluntly. "Did you, by any chance, ever meet a certain great personage in France — at any time?"

The stranger's brown eyes regarded the dominie keenly. Then he looked slowly around the room, half rising on his elbows. He caught sight of his clothes. The dominie, divining his thought, brought them to him. The man at once slipped his hand into the pocket whence Dalgleish had extracted the packet of papers. He flashed a glance at the dominie.

"You will be looking for the letters," said Dalgleish, bringing them from the table where he had placed them.

"*Merci*," said the man.

He removed the top letter and carefully tore it into small pieces. The dominie looked on

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uncomfortably while the operation was in procedure. As the man sank back on his pillow, Dalglish said abruptly:

"It may be that it was well to destroy that. I did not read it, but I saw a word or two, and a name or two, before I knew what I was looking at. Your secret, sir, if it is a secret, is safe, unless you release me from any obligation to silence."

"There is no secret — at least, nothing of which I have reason to be ashamed."

"The *loyal* subjects of the English king are not partial to friends of any certain personage on the Continent — at least not to friends, or *adherents*, of your personage, or of *mine*."

"I see," said the man. "I think I perceive your meaning. We were speaking of different personages."

"From — from what I inadvertently saw," said the dominie, very carefully, "I should judge, however, that the interests of the two personages are in common."

"That may be," was all the man in the bed vouchsafed. His eyes never left Dalglish's face.

It was on the dominie's tongue to ask the

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man why he had come to Scotland, but he realized that he could not thus presume upon a few minutes' acquaintance. Already he was dangerously near the intruding line.

"My name," said he, after a silence, "is James Dalgleish. I am the schoolmaster in Inverlachie."

"My name is Casimir," said the man.

Again there was silence. The two men were regarding each other like a pair of fencers ready to begin a bout. The dominie was standing in the middle of the room, his rugged figure silhouetted against the firelight.

"Casimir," he said, with quiet enunciation. "May I be asking for the rest of your name, sir?" The dominie's tone was almost pleading, and his voice trembled ever so little.

"The rest of my name?" said the man, with a smile. "My full name is Charles Edward Casimir."

"Is that all?" said the dominie, with almost fierce earnestness.

"That is all."

"Is there not a surname which your father dropped years ago — Pardon me if —"

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The man was sitting upright in bed and his eyes had an odd glint.

"I have answered your question. I am not willing to be cross-examined," said he sternly.

"I asked your pardon," said Dalgleish.  
"But you may not be aware that a certain great personage bore that name."

"You mean —"

"Hush!" said the dominie instinctively.

Again the man who called himself Casimir smiled.

"What has that to do with me?" he asked.  
"Is there aught about me to suggest that I am other than a castaway?"

The use of the word "castaway" had a strange effect upon Dalgleish. It was as if the ghost of Prince Charles had arisen — the sad, romantic phantom with the more dolorous word on its dead lips — "*outcast*."

All at once Dalgleish's reserve gave way. He began to talk, wildly, recklessly. He pleaded. He asserted. He rushed from the room and returned presently, his eyes blazing and his face twitching. In his hands he carried the framed picture of Bonnie Prince



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Charlie and set it upright at the foot of the bed, where the stranger could see it.

"I beg you, sir, to answer me at once," said Dalgleish, his tongue tripping like a drunkard's. "Is this a likeness of you — or is it a portrait of your father — or is it of your uncle? Answer me, and let your answer be the truth, as from one man to another who can be trusted. Your name is Charles Edward Casimir *Stuart!*"

Casimir had been staring at the picture as a man might if confronted by a ghost of himself. But at the name uttered by Dalgleish he started as if he had been stabbed. He suddenly covered his eyes and said — whispered hoarsely:

"Take that picture away! I am not strong —"

In a moment Dalgleish had whisked the picture out of sight. But the dominie's face was aglow with joy. When he turned to Casimir the stranger was himself again, only there was in his eyes a depth of wonder and gravity, and something else — a kind of pleasure. But he spoke steadily, in a melodious,

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refined voice, which had a slightly foreign note in it.

"Be careful, my friend, how you utter that name in connection with me," he said. "You imperil your own life — and mine. If I am — what you believe me to be — let no word pass your lips as to the name you saw — there." He pointed to the little pile of torn paper. "France," he added with quiet significance, "has befriended Scotland before."

"Ay — God knows!" said Dalglish tempestuously. "She shielded Jamie and Charlie and the chiefs time and again."

"France," said Casimir, lying back on the pillows and looking at the roof above his head; "France would befriend Scotland again. France would dethrone the tyrant who robbed you of your open racial pride, who tore the purple tartan from your shoulders, the tyrant who turned his redcoats loose among your women and choked the pibroch to silence."

He suddenly sat bolt upright and laid his clenched fist on the crazy bed-quilt.

"France," said he, with a compelling oratorical repetition of the name; "France will

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give back to Scotland the lands the English king stole from its people and gave to his lords for playgrounds. Scotland will come to its own again and a king will come again to his own Scotland!"

James Dalgleish stared with blazing orbs. Through a mist of Jacobite frenzy he saw the head and shoulders of Casimir sway, and heard the gentle thud of the man falling upon the pillows in a faint.

He did not lay hands upon him. He merely lifted his own arms above his head. His teeth crunched together, while great tears suddenly sprang to his eyes and rolled down his furrowed countenance. Next minute he burst into the kitchen, his chest heaving and his throat sobbing.

"Marg'ret! Marg'ret!" he cried, then choked.

He seized his lass by the wrist in a grip that nigh made her cry out from pain. He half-dragged her to the "stewdy" and brought her up by the bedside with his free arm leveled at the fair, foreign face on the pillow.

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"Marg'ret!" he cried in a tense, fierce whisper. "*The King o' Scotland!*"

Instinctively the girl clasped her hands close to her smooth, womanly throat, and she bent her head over them in hero-worship, while her blood sang exultingly to her awe-stricken soul.



## CHAPTER V

### A RED LETTER DAY

**I**NVERLACHIE was still under a rain-cloud when daylight dawned on that memorable Saturday, the morning following Jamie Dalgleish's interview with Charles Edward.

The weather was still boisterous, although the storm had abated considerably. "Gangy" Beckett, the publican, was more and more of the opinion that it was the "eequinocshuls." Sandy McClung, the undertaker, shook his head sadly and said that whatever the weather was, it was good for his business.

Saturday was a good day for romantic, exciting things to happen in Inverlachie. On Saturday folk had time to gossip, or to review the week's gossip. Little work was done on Saturday, for there were many things to attend to, such as gathering firewood and seeing to the minor details which would be major sins if attended to on the "Sawbath

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Day." 'Also, it was fitting that the day before Sunday should be devoted to quiet pursuits, so that the great day of the week would be ushered upon a reposeful world.

Now, in a Scottish village, when active men have little to do they assemble and talk, and when they talk, an ancient deplorable habit makes them assemble at a place where mutual toasts can be drunk. The world-wide power of the Demon Rum is greatly due to the fact that in his many temples a secrecy as binding as freemasonry is observed. In Inverlachie "Gangy" Beckett was the high priest of the Demon.

For instance, Sandy McClung, the undertaker, who was also kirk precentor, could leave the temple two minutes before midnight ushered Sunday. No matter how bad Sandy might be two minutes *after* midnight, he had taken his last "dram" before Sunday broke; therefore it really did not count against him if he appeared at kirk with dark circles around his eyes, or yawned, as he conducted "Old Hundred," in sympathy with Davie Blue's snores from the back pew.

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Davie Blue, you see, was — Well, the secrets of the temple must be observed. But there is reason to believe that a certain story of world fame originated in Inverlachie and concerned Davie Blue. It was Davie who fell by the wayside between “Gangy” Beckett’s and home one Sunday morning. Awaking and continuing his homeward course just as the kirk bell was ringing, he met Mrs. McBane, who was “mortified” because her Skye terrier insisted upon following her to kirk! She begged Davie to whistle the dog home.

“Mistress McBane,” said Davie, with the solemnity of inebriation, “this is nae day for whustlin’!”

To come back to the story, there was the usual Saturday morning assembly at “Gangy” Beckett’s. British Will, the town-crier, was there. His bell was on the counter, and when he had finished his discourse on the international situation, he must go forth and announce a “sale — by — pub-lic — aucshun” (of Miss McCullough’s household goods and plenishing). Davie Blue was there, morosely silent. Davie never had anything to say un-

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less he held the floor entirely; then he would yield to nobody. Sandy McClung, the undertaker, and Hughie Gibson, the soutar, were there, too, the former punctuating British Will's remarks with "Uh-huh!" and "Ay, ay!" and "Ma conscience!" and when he used the last exclamation the pawky soutar cackled and whispered: "Whaur did ye get it, Sandy?"

"We ha' no heard the last o' Napolyin yit!" British Will roared, lifting his bell and bringing it down with a choked clunk for emphasis. "He's declared war on Rooshy, an' England's made an alli'nce wi' Alexander. War agen Rooshy is war agen England, an' war agen England's war agen Scotland! [*Clunk!*] Napolyin will then invade England. If Bonnie Prince Charlie was alive, here'd be his chance, for the Americans need watchin' an' —"

Then the first unusual thing happened. The front door of "Gangy" Beckett's public-house opened and in walked James Dalglish, the schoolmaster.

Now, if the angel Gabriel had walked in,



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the company could not have been more flabbergasted. Not only was the dominie a strong disbeliever in strong drink, but men liked to hold his esteem. Sandy McClung, as an example, liked to have the dominie believe that he never took a drink. Indeed, Sandy always came in by the back door, "as the meenister does. It wad no be seemly itherwise in oor respective professions."

But there was something wrong with the dominie. He was not himself. There was a harum-scarum, swash-buckling, devil-take-me, Sir! expression in his eyes. Davie Blue nudged Hughie Gibson, and the nudge meant that the dominie was "hauf-fu'," which was not so. The dominie was laboring under great mental stress.

"Gentlemen," said he, "will you drink a toast with me?"

A toast? Well—this must be an occasion. Sandy McClung said something about "breakin' his rule," while Davie Blue murmured a remark about "the earliness o' the day." The glasses were filled in amazed silence. They were raised. All eyes were

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fixed on the dominie, when — when the second strange thing happened.

Again the door swung open and a big heavy man with a dissolute face entered. He sharply asked for whiskey; then, seeing the party, he apologized. The dominie recognized him. It was Major Fitzwilliam, who used to be in command at Fort James. He was in civilian attire.

The dominie bowed and raised his glass again. He was about to deliver the toast to the waiting group when a thought illuminated his face with a kind of devil-daring. He bowed genially to Fitzwilliam and said:

“Will the gallant major join me in this toast?”

“Assuredly,” said Fitzwilliam. “A toast is always an excuse for a dram.”

“Except when a toast is the only excuse for drinking,” said the dominie, quietly.

There was a pause. The glasses were raised, Fitzwilliam’s with the rest. The schoolmaster lifted his head proudly and said with great feeling:

“To the King, gentlemen!”

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"The King, God ble —" began Fitzwilliam. Then he stopped and stared.

The toast was no sooner out of the dominie's mouth than he reached his glass to the other side of a decanter and *drew it back to him over the water.*

Instantly Sandy McClung and his cronies did likewise. But their faces were pale and almost frightened. They drank in silence, as did the dominie. Fitzwilliam stood petrified for a moment. Then, as he remembered the significance of the old Jacobite toast, his face became flushed with anger. He dashed the glass of liquor to the floor and shouted:

"If I had an honest witness to that, I'd have you under lock and key for treason!"

He marched out. British Will impulsively seized his bell and made the major's retreat ridiculous by clanging it with a strong arm.

"Gentlemen," said the dominie, "I thank you for drinking my toast — from over the water. You will surely be at the gathering of the Clan to-night?"

"Ay, certes, I'll be there for yin!" cried British Will.

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Davie Blue nudged Hughie Gibson and the town worthies exchanged significant glances. Sandy McClung looked at the floor and seemed to be in deep thought. In the slight pause a voice spoke solemnly from somewhere in the vicinity of a pile of liquor barrels:

*"Ay! Let the clans gather. I am the King!"*

"I'll be there," said Sandy, looking up quietly.

"Sandy McClung!" screamed "Gangy" Beckett. "I hae tell't ye a thoosan' times no to play yer deevil's tricks in here!"

"Good-morning, gentlemen," said the dominie, bowing and taking his departure as unexpectedly as he had entered.

"Imphm!" said Hughie Gibson, when quiet was restored.

"The dominie's cracked!" said Davie Blue. "And yet —"

"It's the weather," said "Gangy" Beckett. "Folks act queer durin' the eequinocshuls."

British Will chuckled to himself and picked up his bell. He gave a hitch to the bag in which he carried his hoarding bills, slipped his

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pail of paste, with the brush in it, over his left arm and went out, limping on the leg which got paralytic at times. Next minute they heard the bell give a double clang six times. The town-crier's great voice roared the details of the sale by public auction of Miss McCullough's household goods and plenishing. Then — the bell clanged again. That meant another announcement. When that bell clanged *at all*, windows opened, heads popped out, or housewives came, arms akimbo, to the doorsteps. British Will's second announcement was in this strain:

“Grand Lecture at the schoolhouse to-night! Sub-ject: ‘Bonnie Prince Charlie, the King o’ the Hielan’s!’ Come one! Come all! The lecture will be delivered by James Dalgleish.”

“Bless ma conscience!” exclaimed the undertaker, making for the back door. “The whole toon’s gone gytel! The ghost o’ Prince Charlie comin’ ashore in the night an’ Janet Glen haein’ veesions an’ the dominie drinkin’ to the Keeng *from ower* the water, an’ Major Fitzwilliam comin’ back sudden-like an’ actin’ umbrageous. Tak’ my word for it, there’s

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goin' to be a wheen o' things happen in this toon afore long."

So saying the undertaker departed, having Dugald Warner's coffin to finish before Sunday's enforced idleness blocked Monday's funeral. Hughie Gibson went off to finish heeling a pair of boots that Jock McNeish, the tailor, wanted for kirk in the morning, and the blacksmith went back to his anvil behind the schoolhouse.

Major Fitzwilliam, who had just arrived from Greenock by ferry and by horse from Morag, walked rapidly through the village and along the military road which led to Fort James. As he was in civilian attire his approach was not particularly noted by the sentry. When he appeared before Kilby, the latter was surprised.

"What the — what are you doing back here!" the junior officer exclaimed.

"Special service, Kilby," said Fitzwilliam. "It need not supersede your command."

The major's face was flushed and sullen. Kilby took his speech to mean that tact was necessary.

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"What's the trouble?" he asked lightly.

"Trouble? Trouble? All's trouble, even here, it seems, in a miserable little herring-box village on the other side of beyond. I would like to ask you a few questions."

"Go ahead."

Fitzwilliam glanced at Kilby. It was apparent that he was wasting bad temper on a good man.

"Well," said he, with a mollified smile, "perhaps some contemporary history will interest you to begin with. You heard, I take it, that England entered into an alliance with Russia several months ago."

"Yes."

"Better listen carefully to what I am saying," said the major, irritated by the other's coolness. "It concerns *you*."

"Me?" said Kilby, amazed. "Go ahead. I am all ears."

"Two months ago Napoleon crossed the Niemen with four hundred thousand men. Two weeks ago the Russians met Napoleon's army at Borodino. A frightful battle ensued, about forty thousand being killed on each

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side. At the present moment Napoleon is either in Moscow, or entering it. You know what that means."

Kilby nodded absently. But what had this to do with him personally?

"That's not all," continued Fitzwilliam. "How much Napoleon has to do with the rest I leave you to guess, as all England is guessing. Four days before Napoleon declared war on Russia — and against the Anglo-Russian alliance — England's attention was distracted by a declaration of war on the part of the American rebels — called by courtesy the United States of America. Nice pickle England's in — hey?"

"Yes," said Kilby slowly. "But — you hinted that this — something concerning me —"

"Presently. Presently!" said the major, with a sneer. "Don't presume that Napoleon has any designs on you, personally. But I believe you are a soldier of his Majesty. The Corsican fox," he went on, unheeding the flush that overspread the captain's temples, "has laid his plans with his usual consummate



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cunning. His old ambition to wreck England is not dead. After Russia — England! At present he is surrounding her with as many troubles as he can encompass for her. The American authorities in Paris have worked hand in glove with Napoleon in this matter. America is annoying England on one side and, if information is correct, the Corsican has planned that a certain glorious old standby of plotters against English peace will contribute more anxiety. There will be trouble in Scotland. Somewhere, among the flotsam and jetsam of nobility and royalty flung down by the French revolution, *Napoleon has unearthed a Stuart!*”

“My dear Fitzwilliam,” said Kilby, without any gravity, “the thing is absurd on the face of it. There was no issue, except a daughter — illegitimate.”

“What of that!” snapped the major. “You know the Jacobites. If you don’t, I do. They would follow a stuffed effigy if it was called Stuart. But I am not here to argue with anybody. I am making statements. Napoleon has found a *man*. He may be a Stuart, or

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he may not be. The point is that this man left Paris when Napoleon started for Russia. He is in Scotland now, and he is backed by all the men, horses, money, and strategic cunning of the Emperor Napoleon!"

For a full minute Captain Kilby stared at the major. He did not like this man, but likes and dislikes were overwhelmed in the call of soldierliness. And all at once his heart began to beat in excitement.

"Why did you come *here*?" he asked.

"To inquire," said Fitzwilliam, impatient at the question, deaf to the tone in which it was asked. "I shall proceed north, inquiring at every turn. I wish to find the news before the news finds me. A rule which I commend to your respectful consideration."

"Perhaps you came to the right place at the outset," said Kilby quietly. "Two nights ago a ship was driven on the Antlers here—you know the reefs? There was only one survivor, and rumor says that he is a resurrected likeness of Prince Charlie. Oddly enough the man's name is said to be Charles Edward, and —"

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Major Fitzwilliam spun around upon his junior, his eyes aflame with triumphant glee.

"Where is that man now?" he almost shouted.

"Keep cool," said Kilby. "It is only rumor. Anyhow, the man, whatever his name and likeness, is here in Inverlachie, too sick to be moved. But the chances are against —"

"Nothing of the sort!" cried the major furiously. "I heard — this morning — I had an experience — I tell you that is the man, and he is here. Furthermore, I'll stake my reputation that he has already declared himself. Very well! God help him, for I won't."

With a sudden and new significance the toast at the tavern and the words that followed had flashed through Fitzwilliam's heated brain.

"Tell me this — if you can tell me nothing else," he said to the captain, who was exercising all the self-control he had against the other's insulting, domineering manner. "What is this thing they call the gathering of the Clan?"

"Gathering of the Clan?" echoed Kilby,

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puzzled for a moment. Then his face cleared and he smiled. "Oh, it's a kind of — a kind of literary society where the lions of Scotland roar every Saturday night."

"Thank you. And one more question, my dear captain. What has Dalgleish — schoolmaster, isn't he? — what has he to do with it?"

"Yes, he's the schoolmaster," said Kilby, more puzzled than ever. "He is the chairman — or something."

Suddenly Kilby looked up at the major, who was regarding him with a pair of eagle eyes. The captain thought he saw a light.

"Come to think of it," he said, "the man I have been telling you about is being cared for at the schoolmaster's house."

"Ah!" said Major Fitzwilliam, his mouth twisting into a gratified smile. He made a mock bow to his subordinate and said, "Thank you."

## CHAPTER VI

### REBELLION BURSTS

**C**HARLES EDWARD got out of bed that Saturday. At first a little weak, movement soon restored him to almost usual activity. The clothes which he had worn in the sea were much the worse for their immersion, and, for reasons of his own, Jamie Dalgleish would not hear of the stranger going abroad wearing anything as conspicuous in Scotland as the French garb.

Later in the day the dominie returned from a walk abroad with a bundle containing a Highland costume. Besides the usual necessary garments, there was a plaid, also a kilt of tartan. The tartan, either by design or accident, was the royal Stuart.

"It will suit you, Sire," said Dalgleish.

At the respectful address, Casimir looked up quickly. The dominie was regarding him with almost doglike admiration and servitude.

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Charles Edward turned abruptly to the window. He remained there for a few minutes, a tall, handsome figure, silhouetted against the light. When he turned to Dalgleish, he said simply:

“If ever I can repay, I will.”

He looked long and curiously at the pile of clothing. It was the regalia of race, the insignia of a chieftain. A great cairngorm stone glowed yellow amid the red of the tartan. Silver buttons and broad brooches suggested the splendor of whom should wear them.

“Put them on,” said Dalgleish. “Then I shall know my king.”

Casimir raised a hand in a gesture of rebuke.

“No. Not that,” he said. “I cannot bear the word. Let me be myself a little while longer. Call me Casimir, or — ay, Charlie, if you will.”

“Char-lie!” said the dominie, like a woman whispering the beloved’s name.

Dalgleish left the “stewdy” and went to the kitchen. Margaret met him, her face radiant, her eyes wide and moist. She had not

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slept; at least her dreams had been wakeful. Yet this morning she was more beautiful than her father had ever noticed before. She had become a woman all at once. There was a different way of breathing; her throat seemed fuller and her head differently poised.

What had wrought this change the girl did not know herself. Her thought had been filled with the man ever since she had seen him first. But it was not the man. Had he been a mere man she would sternly have checked her thought. He was the king! Why should she not love her king?

"What does he do? What does he say? How is he?" she asked tremulously.

The dominie waved an impatient, imperative hand. Poor dominie! He was moving in a dream. *Sir James Dalgleish* was he! A grand name for a Scot. And he was the king's friend — the king's guardian, the king's adviser — *Sir James Dalgleish*, the king-maker!

"Hush, child!" said he.

A little troubled cloud appeared on Margaret's brow. It was a momentary dread of — she knew not what. But it passed as she

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looked at her father and understood. She seemed to hear, with him, the tread of the clansmen's feet, the roll of the drums and the fierce slogan of the pipes. What could withstand the wild men of the mountains — the men who had fought England's battles for her? What could England do against the Highlanders when they thundered across the border with the rightful King of Scotland at their head? — the immortal Charlie who would come and "come again" until the House of Hanover was crumbled in ruin!

The dominie suddenly halted and listened. Through walls and closed doors came the voice of a fiddle, played by no novice. It was an old lament which presently passed into a lively Scotch reel. Dalglish looked at his daughter, and the tears laughed in his eyes. He waved his hand to her and marched to the "stewdy" door, where he paused long enough to give a respectful knock.

"Come in!" cried a gay voice.

Jamie entered. Then he stood for a moment, staring at a man transformed. The last doubt in the schoolmaster's mind was



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wiped out, never to return. The personage before him was — could be no other than — the King of Scotland!

Casimir, translating the expression of the dominie's face correctly, entered into the spirit of the moment. He laid aside the fiddle and folded his arms. Margaret, running to her father's side in answer to his hoarse summons, saw her Prince come again to his own land, his own people, his own costume. The royal kilt half revealed a pair of straight, sinewy limbs, with bare, clean-chiseled knees. The royal tartan, falling from his brooched shoulder to his ankles, imparted a dashing grace to the tall figure, while the gleaming buttons, dirk-hilts, and the cairngorm stone added to that color which is unrivaled in the Stuart costume. Over the refined face with the little mustache and the imperial chin-spot was a bonnet of blue, with a silver clasp on the left side of it. Margaret's eyes traveled over the man, from his buckled shoes to the clasped bonnet. Then she rushed to the front room.

In a minute she came panting back. Brushing her rapt father aside, she ran to Casimir.

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His face betrayed astonishment at her impetuosity. She saw it, and came to a halt before him, a confused blush on her bonnie face. In her hand she carried a pair of blackcock's feathers.

Casimir instinctively took the bonnet from his head. She, misunderstanding the action, held out her hand to take it. He looked at her questioningly. Then he saw what she wanted. Her fingers trembled as she fastened the arching feathers in the silver clasp. Presently she lifted her eyes to his and held out the bonnet. A swift change came over the man's face as she courtesied low.

"No, no!" he exclaimed. "It is I who —"

He dropped on one knee as she straightened up, for he had seen the confusion and pain of misunderstanding in her face. He seized the hand which held the bonnet and touched it with his lips. Then he arose and looked down into her radiant face. He took the bonnet and placed it reverently upon her own head. As Napoleon's hat will transform almost any face to a likeness of the Corsican, so in an instant all the racial features of the

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Scotswoman stood revealed, doubly strong, beneath the blue bonnet with the proud black-cock's feathers.

"If I am Charles Edward," said Casimir, with a sad smile, "then have I found brave Flora Macdonald."

The dominie in the doorway tried to cry out a protest, but his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, for Margaret was looking up into the face of the prince with eyes that saw nothing, dreamed nothing, but her prince.

"Margaret," said the dominie, when they were together again in the kitchen, "I must go now. The gathering is at seven. Bring him when 't is nearer eight. I wish," he added, with almost childish wistfulness, "I wish that all may see him!"

The Clan was gathered in the schoolhouse across the street. There had never been such a gathering. That which had previously been laughingly looked upon as a convention of hot-headed Scotia-maniacs, was to-night an assembly of every sort and condition in Inverlachie. The schoolhouse was packed to

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the utmost and on the rear benches men and boys were standing up, holding to one another's shoulders for support. For a sensation was expected. Rumor had been busy all day.

In one of the middle benches sat the five Maclarty brothers. It seemed that only one man was missing — old Hugh Black, the minister. He was at home, preparing his hour-long sermon for the morrow. But there were many unexpected figures at the gathering. Janet Glen was among the number. She sat, to the amazed satisfaction of the village gossips, beside Dr. Tom Wallace in the front seat. On the doctor's left was Peggy — Peggy of the brown hair and the solemn hazel eyes — and on Peggy's left sat a soldier in the uniform of his Majesty. Kilby was oftener "eyes right" than "eyes front."

There was one other unexpected person. Until his arrival Peggy had lost much of that over-coyness which her father deplored. Kilby felt that the course of true love was running quite smoothly until the unexpected arrived.

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It was Fitzwilliam. He was still in civilian costume. He entered almost unobserved and took a seat in the third bench from the front. After a ripple of laughter at something Kilby had whispered in her ear, Peggy happened to turn her head. She saw the major. All at once she grew pale. Kilby felt her arm tremble as it touched his. Instantly the girl lapsed into moody, wide-eyed silence. She did not again turn her head.

"I wonder what I said?" Kilby asked himself. Such is the egoism of love.

James Dalgleish arose and announced that the gathering would open with the singing of the first verse of the 114th Psalm. The audience arose and rolled out the required verse in typical droning Scots style:

"When Isr'el out of Egypt went,  
And did his dwelling change,  
When Jacob's house went out from those  
That were of language strange,  
He Judah did his sanctuary,  
His kingdom Isr'el make:  
The sea it saw, and quickly fled,  
Jordan was driven back."

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'After the rear seats had finished the psalm half a line later than the front benches, James Dalgleish began to speak. He was nervous, and the fact made every ear incline toward him more eagerly.

He said they were not gathered there for any special purpose, save to revive interest in the lore of Scotland. He spoke of Scott, who by his "Border Minstrelsy" had revived the minstrel spirit. He touched with great feeling on the lamented Robert Burns, and took occasion to remark that this young man, Byron, would command even greater admiration if he would forget his own sorrows and launch out into the wider paths of poesy.

"But," said James Dalgleish, "his case, as compared with other poets, proves the assertion that a Scotsman sings about his sweetheart, an Irishman sings about his country, and an Englishman sings about himself!"

There was a burst of applause at this. Fitzwilliam, in the third row, flushed angrily. Peggy recovered sufficiently to flash a mis-

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chievous glance at Kilby, who grinned amiably.

After Jamie had read a selection from Scott and branched off in a tangent discourse on Caledonia having been the "nurse" to more than poetic children, British Will, who had been making frantic signals of eloquent distress, was asked if he would address the meeting.

British Will arose and glared around the audience for ten seconds. Will — Craig was his other name — was an ardent supporter of whatever party was in power. In times of peace he earned his nickname because he referred to the common cause of England and Scotland as "British." Then he would rant and roar in excellent imitation of the lion in pain. But when the discussion came down to a weighing of matters between Scotland and the border neighbor, his apoplectic blood became frenziedly Scots.

To-night he at once turned his batteries upon the neighbor across the border, to the amusement of Kilby and the enraging of the major in the third row. British Will, hav-

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ing left his bell behind, kept Davie Blue dodging the emphatic blows which the orator inflicted on the bench-back behind the blacksmith's head.

According to Will, England was in a decline. Were it not for Scotland she could not hold up her head in the face of "Napoléon" and the Americans. The latter, Will pointed out, were merely fighting for their own rights, as Scotland had done time and again. England's policy, the town-crier bawled, was to make slaves of her colonial subjects. She had tried to make Scotland a colony, but Scotland had thrashed her *first*, then, out of pity, taken *her* into the Union.

"The only Englishmen in Scotland are soldiers," said Will. "Most of them are dead. There's thirty thousand of them up around Stirling. They've been there five hunder' years, an' they like the place that much they're no thinkin' o' leavin' yet!"

Roars of applause greeted this. Will, encouraged, cracked another which he had picked up somewhere, although he uttered it as personal experience.



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"An' talkin' o' Bannockburn," said he, "reminds me o' an Englishman who offered me half-a-croon for showing him where Bruce made his address on the field. Ah tell't him to keep his half-croon, as the affair had cost him an' his countrymen ower much already!"

There was a roar at this. When the applause subsided the figure of a man was standing erect in the third row. It was Fitzwilliam.

"I would remind the speaker and the chairman that there is an officer of his Majesty present."

"Hoot, toot!" said British Will, before the chairman could say anything. "We're gled to hae twa sides to the matter present. He will hae a chance to talk when Ah'm din. If he doesna want to talk when Ah'm din he shouldna interrupt till Ah am!"

Turning then to the audience, Will said apologetically:

"As it seems Ah'm hurtin' a man's feelin's, Ah'll no detain ye wi' any len'thened observations, as the meenester says when he's

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jist gettin' warmed up to his sermon. But Ah'll wind up right here by sayin' that if ye took a' the Scotsmen oot o' England's fightin' forces, *ye could knock the rest doon wi' a feather!*"

British Will sat down amid thunderous cheering, hand-clapping, whistling, and stamping of feet.

Jamie Dalgleish, fearing an argument with Major Fitzwilliam and a disorderly reception of the Englishman's remarks, stood with uplifted hand. He seized a momentary lull to announce that Davie Blue would recite "in his inimitable way" that greatest of national war-songs — "Scots Wha Hae!" — the "grandest ode out of the Bible."

This was a signal for another roar of applause, for, aside from local favoritism and the audience's humor, to hear Davie Blue, the mighty blacksmith, recite that terrific address was a liberal education in the full meaning of the Bruce's supposed words to his followers at Bannockburn. After the announcement Fitzwilliam might have talked on, unheard or unheeded. Cries of "Davie Blue! Hammer

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the English, Davie!" brought the blacksmith to the platform.

The brawny Davie stood by the chairman's table, leaning on the fist and arm which had once killed a mad bull with one blow of a sledge-hammer. When silence was effected, he began in a low, slow, ponderous voice, while a pin could have been heard dropping in any part of the schoolhouse. Every ear was strained to catch every intonation; every eye was watching the blacksmith's rugged face, which slowly became aflame with racial ferocity:

"Scots, wha hae wi' *Wallace bled*,  
Scots, wham *Bruce* has aften led;  
*Welcome* to your gory bed,  
Or to Victory!

"*Now's* the day, and *now's* the hour;  
See the front o' battle lour;  
See approach *proud Edward's power* —  
*Chains and slavery!*

"Wha will be a *traitor* knave?  
Wha can fill a *coward's* grave?  
Wha sae base as be a *slave*?  
Let *him* turn and flee!"

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“But —!” This was the blacksmith’s great interpolation with a sledge-hammer blow on the table.

“Wha for *Scotland’s King* and law,  
Freedom’s sword will strongly draw;  
Freeman stand, or freeman fa’,  
Let *him* follow *me*!”

There was a little ripple of applause, which was hushed by a gale of hisses from those who were too deeply stirred to welcome diversion. After a pause the blacksmith began the awe-inspiring peroration, his voice modulated to a minor tone of intense passion:

“By oppression’s woes and pains!  
By *your sons* in servile chains!  
We will drain our dearest veins,  
But — they *SHALL* be free!”

As the “shall” boomed through the still room, the door of the schoolhouse opened. Eyes flashed impatiently at the intruder, then eyes became fixed in a rigid stare. In a flash every one saw it. The apparition appearing at that moment conveyed the same meaning to every mind present.

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There came a gasp — a sharp intaking of breath throughout the entire audience. Jamie Dalgleish was on his feet, his face blazing with triumph. Fitzwilliam, too, was on his feet, his face convulsed with sneering fury. Davie Blue, who had seen the figure in the royal Stuart tartan before any one else, was stricken dumb. Yet from upper air came a hollow, unnatural voice crying the verse which Davie could not utter:

*“ Lay the proud usurper low!  
Tyrants fall in every foe!  
Liberty’s in every blow!  
Let us DO or DIE!”*

The audience sprang up as one, and as if fired by the same slow match. Jamie Dalgleish was shouting at the top of his voice. Sandy McClung, the mischief-maker, was scared at what he had done. But the crowd took no heed. As a rush was made toward the door a scream split the air, while the five Maclarty brothers sprang up and roared with one voice:

“ Prince Chairlie!”

But when the door was reached, the ghost

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of the rebellion of '45 had vanished. In the place where it had been stood a pale, wide-eyed young woman — Margaret Dalglish — and at her feet lay the crumpled figure of a very aged man.

## CHAPTER VII

### FITZWILLIAM INTERVIEWS

**I**T was not Margaret who screamed; it was the old man, before he fell at her feet. Old Donald Cameron — “Rock-of-Ages” Cameron, they called him — was the oldest man in Inverlachie; in fact, he may have been the oldest man in Scotland at that time. He was at least one hundred and five years old. Although his last ten years had been something of a blank page, there were times when he remembered things and could yammer a tale of Culloden where, as a middle-aged man, he fought under Charlie. Cameron had been near the Prince and esteemed by him during his short career of glory, prior to that fatal day in 1745.

His two sons, Archie and Rob, had taken old Cameron to the “lecture,” thinking that the talk of the “Bonnie Prince” might stir

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their father's half-dead faculties to a last flicker of interest. "Rock-of-Ages" had promptly fallen asleep, to awaken only once during the speech-making. That was when British Will roared out about Charlie's chances (had he been alive), with England beset by France and America. As the name was not mentioned again, the centenarian relapsed into lethargy, from which he was rudely awakened by the noisy climax.

The uproar could have conveyed nothing to the old man's dazed mind. But near the doorway of the hall, toward which his robust sons forced a way with their aged father, his sight became young again. His eyes blazed. He clutched Rob and Archie with his shaky hands and stared at the figure in the doorway.

"Wha's yon? Wha's yon?" he yammered, bending forward with his eyes bulging from his head.

All at once he uttered a shrill scream, extended his arms to the royal figure in the doorway and tried to rush forward. He broke away from his sons. His mouth was open wide and his tongue trying to say



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something. Just at that moment the man in the doorway turned and walked swiftly out. "Rock-of-Ages" collapsed at Margaret's feet, and when they picked him up he was dead!

The incident made a profound impression, for various reasons. Death is a shock to those who are left behind, even when the victim has long passed the allotted three score and ten and has been living for thirty years with both feet in the grave. But what struck a thrill to the hearts of all who knew "Rock-of-Ages" Cameron, and of his life, was the fact that the old man had persistently prophesied for nearly seventy years that "Charlie would come again some day." It was as if the withered man had clung to life until his eyes had seen, and the cry that came shrilly from his lips was his "*Nunc Dimittis*."

The sons showed no signs of grief. They were loving, but practical. They picked up their father and cleared a way by jerking their heads. In a minute it was all over — the cause and the effect.

But a less material effect remained. Who-

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ever the man in the Stuart tartan might be, old Cameron's recognition of him, and his dramatic death, had settled the matter as far as Inverlachie was concerned. "Rock-of-Ages" prophecy had come true. Charlie had come again. "Rock-of-Ages," dull as his faculties were, had recognized him at a glance !

It was Doctor Wallace who pronounced him dead. It was he who assisted the two Camerons to their home with their grim burden. Before leaving the schoolhouse in company with the pale-faced, conscience-troubled undertaker, Wallace whispered to Kilby that he would be obliged if the captain would see Peggy and Janet home at once. The captain assured the doctor that it would be a pleasure.

It was not, altogether. After leaving Janet at her cottage, Peggy had not a word to say, as she and her suitor walked on to the doctor's place. At the gate she held out her hand and simply said, "Thank you — good-night."

He tried to detain her. He felt the hand linger and tremble in his for a moment. Hope

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sprang up in the young soldier's heart. But in an instant the hand was withdrawn — almost jerked from his.

"Peggy!" he cried.

"Good-night," she said, her voice strangely choked.

He stood for a while looking at the cottage, happy and miserable, hopeful and despairing. He wished to see her light the lamp, and her shadow as she drew the blinds. But the cottage remained in darkness, although he waited twenty minutes. He believed she had gone to bed in the dark. She had; that is, she had gone to her room, and there she was lying in the dark, fully dressed, with her face in the pillows.

Back in the cobbled street between the schoolhouse and the whitewashed house where the dominie lived, was the crowd which had listened to the speeches and witnessed the dramatic and tragic *dénouement* of the Clan gathering.

The crowd was silent as before it had been noisy. The five Maclarty brothers were lined up in front of it, at the side facing the white-

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washed house, and all eyes were fixed expectantly upon the windows.

The dominie had gone inside. In a few minutes he returned. He was bareheaded and much agitated.

"Will he not come out?" was the whisper. "We only wish to see him — to look at his face again!"

"I do not know — I do not understand!" exclaimed the dominie. "He is not in the house. He is not in the house. And I do not think he could have returned here. He could not have entered — I am sure, for the door was locked. Margaret locked it when she left with him to come to the meeting. It was she who unlocked the door when we returned. He could not have come back to the house."

"James Dalglish," said a man called Mac-laren, "can ye tell us for certain if he's — if he's —"

"No, no!" interrupted Dalglish hastily. "Do not ask *me*. It is not wise, or safe, for *me* to speak of it. You have seen. For the rest, let *him* answer."

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There was a murmuring in the crowd, of wonder more than impatience.

"Ae thing's certain," said "Gangy" Beckett, "puir Rock-o'-Ages kenned him in a wink!"

"Dreadfu'!" "Fearfu'!" "It's nae ither!" came in a confused gabble.

Gradually the crowd dispersed and took up its stand in various knots in various parts of the village, whence they all could keep an eye on the square, whitewashed house which harbored the amazing personage. Hours passed and still no figure appeared heading for, or entering, Dalgleish's house. In the wee small hours weariness began to assert itself upon the villagers, who were accustomed to nine-o'clock beds. Along about three in the morning there was not a soul in sight.

But the mine had been fired. Already the news was finding its way to neighboring villages — Morag and Inverary. With Jacobite rapidity it would be all over Argyll to-morrow and into Inverness. To-morrow the rumor would speed through Highland glens into strongholds of the Macdonalds, the Stuarts, the Camerons, the Macgregors — all

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Scotland would be listening with both ears to the ground. To-morrow, too, it would be over to the lowland shore, be talked of in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and then the border would come into its fame again!

Only one man had followed Casimir into the night. Prince or no prince, Fitzwilliam knew that *this* was his man and was determined to deal with him at once — alone, if possible — the more alone the better.

When the major reached the cobbled street there was no one in sight. He dashed in through the side gate of Dalgleish's house and along a little gravel walk which led to the kitchen door — the door which was used in daily life, the front door being reserved for Sundays and occasions.

The house was in darkness. Fitzwilliam paused at the kitchen entrance and listened. He could hear no sound within, and, without, the night stillness was broken only by the moaning of wet wind and the wail of the tin windmill on the apple tree. Fitzwilliam gently tried the door. It was locked.

He returned to the street. Experience told

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him that, in a coast town, a man who has nowhere else to go instinctively turns to the sea. Also, the steep road to the shore presented a flight of least resistance. Next moment Major Fitzwilliam was marching down the street on the "double." On the shore he found nothing but the desolation of the bare, shelving beach; desolation accentuated by the snarling sea-rollers and the melancholy sucking of the backwash.

Fitzwilliam paused undecided. The shore road skirted the bay to an abrupt termination at the base of some high cliffs away to the left. The land exit from Inverlachie toward the east lay over the dominie's hill and was a continuation of the cobbled street. If the man in tartan had not left Inverlachie by that road, in all probability he had come to the beach and then struck off to the right. This half of the shore road joined the military road at the end of the bay, and the military road then climbed over a rocky horn and continued to Fort James and past it to St. Catherine, where there was a ferry to Inverary, the Campbell stronghold.

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Fitzwilliam smiled to himself. It showed the man's ignorance that he should land in that part of Scotland where a Stuart uprising would stand least chance of success. Of course, the man had been cast ashore, willy-nilly. In any event he had landed in a hornets' nest when he struck Inverlachie. The village itself was composed of disbanded clansmen from the north and lowlanders from the south; but twenty miles to the north was Inverary, where sat that nightmare of the Stuart cause—the Duke of Argyll! If he had landed on the west coast and gone into Inverness, as Prince Charlie had, well—it might be another story.

Back to Fitzwilliam's fast-working mind, as he stepped upon the military road, came the memory of the face he had seen in the schoolhouse. The seditious atmosphere of the meeting had not been forgotten; neither had British Will's remarks ceased to rankle. To the mind of the major it was "perfectly clear" that this matter was well launched already; that the Pretender had already made himself known and been accepted; that the



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poison of Jacobitism was already in the land.

How long had the disease been at work? Why — what was he thinking about? — the man had been in Inverlachie less than forty-eight hours! But two days counted for much among the Jacobites, whose blood responded at a word. Kilby should have known; but — Kilby was a fool. A laugh broke from Fitzwilliam's lips. Yes, Kilby *was* a fool! Fitzwilliam had seen —

The major stopped short and every thought in the world but one was driven from his mind. He had reached the highest point of the road where it crossed the rocky horn. The rocks piled up to his left, looking out in hunched grandeur over the salt sea-arm — Loch Fyne. A wet half-moon had broken occasionally through ragged clouds. It now shone steadily for a full minute.

Standing twenty paces from the major, with his arms folded, his head turned as if his eyes looked away down the loch, was the man Fitzwilliam was most anxious to meet. The tartan plaid was blowing from

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Charles Edward's shoulder toward the major, who, observing the direction of the wind, understood why his approach had not been heard.

The wet moon slipped into a rift of gray-black cloud, the edges of which became like frayed silver. Fitzwilliam seized the minute of darkness to steal closer to his man. Presently he was within five paces of him. Still the tall, straight figure never moved, nor turned in his direction. Then Fitzwilliam spoke, clearing his throat and uttering his words with gentle sarcasm:

"I do not wish to intrude upon your Highness," said he. "But will your princeliness condescend to an interview?"

Casimir gave a slight start. Then he turned slowly and faced Major Fitzwilliam. Like a convenient spot-light the moon emerged and neatly illumined both men, so that each distinctly saw the other's face.

For a moment neither spoke. Casimir had not moved where he stood on the rocks above Fitzwilliam, and his arms were still folded. The English major had to admit to himself that, prince or pretender, the man was every

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inch of what he claimed to be, in appearance at least. Casimir was looking down upon him with slightly arched brows, but no sign of dismay or surprise.

"Good-evening, Captain Fitzwilliam," said he, quietly.

"Major," Fitzwilliam managed to say, too astonished in another way to wonder how the man knew his name.

"Ah, — pardon — Major," said Charles Edward, with a faint smile. "We progress."

Fitzwilliam made no comment on this. He stood in the roadway, staring up at the man on the rocks, at his face, at his clothing, and vainly trying to reconcile the two with a vague memory.

"We — have met somewhere," he managed to say at last. The memory, whatever it was — and Fitzwilliam did not know — was not a pleasant one.

"If we have, you should recall it," said the Prince. "If you cannot recall it, it is probably hardly worth remembering."

Fitzwilliam stared. Yes, he had met this man — somewhere. Where? Where had he

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seen this nobly-cast, refined face, that quiet mouth, that broad brow? Where had he looked into those gentle, but capable, eyes, and listened to that quiet, easy tongue, which — he knew, somehow — could deliver words as scathing as steel?

“Yes, by Heaven! I have met you before!” he exclaimed.

“A mere trifle, my dear Cap — Major, unless it is that conscience goads reminiscence.”

The speech stung Fitzwilliam.

“No doubt I shall remember later,” he rasped. “Then the memory may serve against you and your schemes. And so, my good friend whoever-you-are, you are in the service of Napoleon — a French spy — hey?”

“That is a lie,” said the man, quietly turning his back upon Fitzwilliam and resuming his study of the far waters.

“Is your name Charles Edward?” demanded Fitzwilliam.

“It is.”

“Casimir?”

The man slowly turned his head and looked in the major’s direction. His face was too

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much in the dark of the moon for the soldier to note its expression.

"You have a poor memory, Major Fitzwilliam," said he. Again the Englishman tortured his memory for the reason of this haunting sensation which beset him. But he could not find the clue.

"Answer me without subterfuge!" cried Fitzwilliam, furiously. "Did you land on these shores and proclaim yourself Charles Edward, heir to Charles Edward Philip Casimir Stuart and to the crown of Scotland?"

"Pardon me, Major. You are somewhat rapid and you forget that the wind is blowing your words — to wind. If I caught your full utterance, you wish to know if I landed on these shores. You had better ask the five Maclarty brothers, who know more about my arrival than I do. As to who I am, or what I may, or may not, have proclaimed myself, I am under no obligation at this unseemly time or place to answer."

"Are you, or are you not, what they believe you are?" demanded Fitzwilliam, with a persistence that raised his utterance to a shout.

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"If I were," said the Prince, coolly, "it is hardly likely that I should make a confidant of the British Army, as represented in Major Herbert Fitzwilliam."

He turned to the sea again and seemed to resume his musing. The major, utterly at a loss for words, chewed his underlip and gritted his teeth together. The man was laughing at him — *damn* him!

Five minutes later, when Charles Edward turned his head, the major had disappeared. The Prince came slowly down from the rocks and took the road which the major had traversed, toward Fort James. But he did not go as far as the fort. Presently he left the defined track and wandered up a heathery slope to the right. He came to a low, smooth rock upon which he spread part of his plaid. The remainder of its voluminous length he wound around him against the damp air, and he sat down. He wanted to think and be undisturbed in his thinking. To-morrow his solitude would necessarily be at an end.

Fitzwilliam was in a furious temper when he reached the fort. He passed through the

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guardroom with an ominous scowl on his brow and a no less ominous chewing of his underlip. He slammed the heavy door of the officers' quarters behind him and fell to pacing the floor. Once he glanced at the clock. It wanted a few minutes of midnight.

For half an hour he continued to pace up and down the room, his hatred and fear of the man on the rocks — hatred born of intellectual inferiority, fear born of an elusive reminiscence — growing every moment as he thought of the manner in which Charles Edward had coolly answered, or evaded, his pertinent or impertinent questions.

"Casimir? Casimir! Yes, yes. The name —" he mused. "It's familiar. But where the deuce —? And he knew me. What does he know about me?" Had he been a man with a clean past the question would hardly have arisen. "Yes, he knew me — when I was a captain. Where was it? Captain — that was five years ago. Where was I — then? Ah!"

He suddenly came to a dead halt. Over his flushed, full-blooded face spread a hue

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that was more of reminiscent guilt than of terror.

“My God!” he whispered.

And that was all, while the ticking of the big clock in the outer guardroom came distinctly through the heavy doors.

Fitzwilliam's memory had returned.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE MINISTER DISCOURSES

SUNDAY morning came as one of the clear, cool September days which, when they do come, make Scotland a land of romantic beauty. The sun shone lavishly; the mists rolled away from the mountains; the wind died to a ruffle, and the sea and land lay under a bluish tint, save where nearness gave a brownish hue to the faded heather bloom.

The old parish kirk bell was tolling with nearness and clearness. Matthew Meiklejohn, who hauled at the great rope in the old tower, perspired under his Sunday coat and fresh linen. If a man must labor of a Sunday — even for the Lord — the least he can do is keep his coat on!

From the cottages, at the third stroke of the big bell, came the good people of Inver-

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lachie. All the excitement and gossip in the world must not disturb the Sunday morning practice of worship. With their Bibles clasped severely in their hands — Scots Bibles with the metrical Psalms and Paraphrases and a map of the environs of Jerusalem at the back — and with their plaids folded around them with Sunday precision, they solemnly marched up the cobbled street to the gates of the venerable parish kirk. They did not speak to one another, save to remark that it was a “Fine mornin’.” They did not smile, but bowed to one another as if doubtful of the acquaintance, or the propriety of acknowledging a week-day intimacy on a “Sawbath.”

Davie Blue, having washed the smithy soot into convenient crevices of his eye corners and wrinkled neck, marched to kirk three paces ahead of Mrs. Blue. The little Blues strung out behind in the order of their size and importance. Hughie Gibson, the shoemaker, having put a clean bandage on an awl-jabbed thumb, cocked one eye into a semblance of thoughtful piety and cleared his throat as he neared the sacred portals. Sandy McClung,

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in his undertaking suit, carried his tune-book on his vest, supporting the flat square volume with two hands; and his eyes were cast upward in thought.

Only once Sandy lowered his eyes. That was as he passed the newly-dug grave which on the morrow was to receive all that was left of old Dugie Warner, the lum-sweep. Sandy McClung observed that Sinclair — called Sinky, the Grave-digger — had made a good job of it, but he should ha' shored up they sides after the wet weather! The rest of the congregation glanced with morbid joy at the grave as they passed to the kirk door, rolling up their eyes and murmuring with woeful regularity: "Puir auld Dugie!"

There was, indeed, a larger congregation than usual this Sunday morning. It may have been the weather, although, for that matter, what was grand weather for kirk-going was grand weather for staying away. But if the truth must be told — a deplorable truth — the folk always went to kirk when there was a bit of excitement in the air. Kirkyards and teacups were ever the allies of Scotch tattle.

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And there was a hope — a hope which was fulfilled. The congregation was locked up in the pews, 'over the high tops of which one could peep without being peeped at, when Jamie Dalgleish entered. He was preceded by "Gangy" Beckett, the verger (who carried himself with the air of a fat footman ushering a lord, at least) and followed by Margaret and — the Prince!

Heads raised slowly over the high pew backs and there was an audible sigh of excitement. There he was!

Casimir followed Dalgleish and Margaret, who were shown with great ostentation to their pew at the front of the kirk. The dominie stood aside, as did Margaret, to let the Prince enter first. The Prince smiled and bowed to Margaret, who took her seat. The Prince sat down beside her. Dalgleish, having surveyed the congregation with a swift, meaning glance, sat beside his Highness. It was to see this man that the congregation had turned out in full force. And there he was — the King of Scotland — in the wee kirk at Inverlachie. It was the proud day!

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In silence the congregation sat. There was no whispering. Eyes exchanged unspoken remarks, but, for the rest, eyes merely feasted on the well-shaped head that rose above the pew-back at the front. And there was a general kindliness and favor of feeling that the rightful King of Scotland should not have forgotten his first duty in the land — homage to his Kirk and God.

As a matter of fact, Casimir would never have thought of kirk-going, but upon his return, after an all-night outing and reverie, he had found Jamie and Margaret in their Sunday best, waiting for him. There was no question about his coming to kirk. Jamie Dalgleish just handed him his own Bible and said:

“The bell ’ll ring in twa minutes, Sire!”

In another pew, the door of which bore the legend “THOMAS WALLACE, M.D.,” the doctor sat alone. Usually Peggy was with the widower, but — she was not there. Kilby observed the fact, peering over the top of the strangers’ pew (unlettered) at the back of the kirk. The captain lost interest in the service

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immediately. When the Rev. Hugh Black opened with a sonorous, long-drawn prayer about everybody being horribly steeped in the slough of sinfulness, Kilby fidgeted. Just as the psalm was announced, he slipped through the pew door and presently reached the more cheerful temple of the open sunshine.

Now, there was a little stir of surprise when the psalm was announced. Usually the kirk service opened with "Old Hundred," than which the Scots loved nothing better. It had such opportunities for sonorous delivery and, as there was no choir or organ, the congregation could compel Sandy McClung's baton to wait until they were ready to end one line and begin the next. Usually Davie Blue was making up for lost sleep before the rest arrived at the declaration that "it is seemly so to do."

But to-day, instead of "Old Hundred," Psalm 21 was announced; and it was the beginning of a service which, to the ready-grasping mind of the congregation, was fraught with significance and pointedness concerning the man in the royal tartan in the

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front pew. As the congregation stood up, every eye glanced from Psalm-book to the figure which towered a full head over Jamie Dalglish. Truly a fine man — every inch a king! Sandy McClung led off, keeping three words ahead of the droning congregation:

“The king in thy great strength, O Lord,  
Shall very joyful be:  
In thy salvation rejoice  
How veh’mently shall he!

“For thou with blessings him prevent’st  
Of goodness manifold;  
And thou hast set upon his head  
A crown of purest gold.

“Because the king upon the Lord  
His confidence doth lay;  
And through the grace of the Most High  
Shall not be moved away,

“Thou therefore shalt make them turn back,  
When thou thy shafts shall place  
Upon thy strings, made ready all  
To fly against their face!”

It was if the congregation was again upon the moors in the bitter cold rain, hunted by

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the redcoats and still upholding their covenant with God! They sang with a slow insistence and dogged ferocity. And when it came to the lengthy sermon, the spirit was working in them, the religious fervor which is so akin to Jacobite frenzy. During old Black's discourse eyes never moved for long from the royal figure in the front pew. The Prince, if the truth must be told, was thinking mostly of the dreariness of the Scots kirk when his thoughts were not turned to the lass who, at every significant remark of the preacher, glanced sidewise at him and blushed when she found him regarding her with a quiet, admiring eye.

The minister's text was a sensation. Apparently he had heard, and was determined to profit by the excitement in the village to the extent of an appropriate sermon:

*"And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it."*

*"And again, from Luke 22:71: 'And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.'"*



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Not a word was lost upon the congregation. At first there were side-glances and significant eye-twitchings, but presently the congregation devoted all their attention to the preacher, listening, with their eyes fixed half vacantly upon the man whom they believed — with reason — to be subject of discourse.

It was difficult to make out just what the minister was driving at. One minute he said something which was conclusive that he believed Charles Edward Casimir to be the rightful King of Scotland. At least, so it seemed to the congregation, who had little thought for the divine side of the discourse. Next minute the minister would throw out the suggestion that Christ had made his answer in sarcasm — for he pointed out that, while on earth, Christ was a man and that He could utter a sarcasm just as He uttered a satire when he described the Pharisees praying on the street corners, “that they may be seen of men.”

Yet again he interpreted Christ's remark as the reply of a man who had become tired of reiterating in the face of doubters. And

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he did not forget to speak of the interpretation placed upon this remark by the arch-doubter, Antichrist, who explained that the great man who was Christ knew it would avail nothing to say "No" — for half the people would believe anyway and the other half could never be convinced.

When he had finished with the first part of his text, the minister took up the second, and his treatment of this left the congregation fair mazed as to what the preacher was driving at. But the sarcasm was stronger in the reply of the high priests and jailers when they said, "*What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.*"

Then the Rev. Hugh Black began to sum up. His summing up was a mixture of pros and cons, for the Rev. Hugh himself was drifting in an impossible comparison of the circumstances of one case and of the other. But he rallied himself and came back to theology at the end, wherein it was made clear that Christ *was* the King of the Jews, no matter what reply he might have made to Pilate, and the congregation heaved a sigh of

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satisfaction, for to them it was clear that the man in the royal tartan *was* Charles Edward, King of Scotland, no matter what Charles Edward might, or might not, say to the contrary. The minister had — involuntarily, perhaps — set upon Charles Edward Casimir the approval of the Kirk o' Scotland!

Then followed a twenty-minutes' prayer, which was really a *résumé* of the hour-long sermon. The minister made a special plea for all those who traveled in darkness, and expressed the hope and trust that the "right would prevail." It was a phrase he had used every Sunday for thirty years, but to-day it meant more to the constructing mind of Inverlachie.

Then the congregation arose with a solemn rustle and prepared to depart. The usual little assemblies in the kirkyard for a "crack," or reminiscences over a gravestone, were greater than ever this Sunday. Not a man, woman, or child left the kirkyard until the Prince put in an appearance. Having been seated in the front pew, he and Dalgleish and Margaret were among the last to leave. When Casimir

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came out he found a human-walled lane stretching for twenty-five yards from the kirk door. He noticed that every one had uncovered, and instinctively he took off the feathered bonnet which he had just placed upon his head. He stood for a moment in the doorway, seeming a little surprised. His erect bare-headedness made him particularly handsome. The brilliant royal Stuart costume surrounded him with romantic picturesqueness.

Behind him stood Jamie Dalgleish, flushed and proud, while at his side stood Margaret, her bonnie face suffused with pleasure. The Prince, recovering from his surprise, bowed and smiled. Then, with the grace of a polished courtier, he offered an arm to Margaret, and the little lass was walking down the lane with him the next moment.

The congregation stood looking after them with dog-like eyes, in which sympathy for the lass and glory in the man made a mingled expression. The women, it must be confessed, thought that she was something of a conceited upstart, meaning thereby that she was too greatly honored.

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But Margaret had no thought for anything but the honor. She was happy, and her father, walking behind, sighed — he knew not why. The Prince and his little lady walked slowly down the gravel walk toward the gate. On the left was the new grave for Dugie Warner, the lum-sweep. The Prince immediately drew Margaret's attention to the scene on the right side. Five men, dressed in blue bonnets, tartan trews, and each wearing silver-brooched plaids, were grouped beside a grave, their eyes fixed intently upon a sunken, slanting tombstone. They were so startlingly alike that Casimir could not help placing their identity.

"Tell me, Miss Margaret," he whispered, "to which one am I indebted?"

"I — I think — I — I don't know. They are —"

"I can understand your uncertainty," said the Prince with a little laugh. "However, if I address them collectively, I will make no mistake."

He stopped on the gravel walk opposite the men. They had been conscious of his ap-

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proach, for instantly five pairs of eyes lifted, five pairs of shoulders squared, five bonnets were jerked off, disclosing five shaggy, gray heads, slightly bowed.

Casimir removed his own bonnet and bowed. His eye caught the moss-filled lettering on the sunken slab tombstone. There was a familiar name and a familiar date — “MACLARTY . . . 1745.”

Charles Edward became strangely moved. Suddenly his chin sank upon his breast. The whole congregation was looking on and whispering, “Look at him!” “He kens!” “He’s nigh to greetin’.” But the man in the royal Stuart tartan pulled himself together and held out his hand to the nearest of the Maclartys, saying something about his gratitude for the bravery which had saved his life.

He said the thing so that all of the Maclartys could hear. No particular one made any sign that he appreciated the thanks more than his brothers. Each stepped forward in turn, took the delicate hand between two horny ones and said one word in Gaelic.

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And as they said the word, which was clearly understood by the onlookers, each Maclarty's face blazed with a fanatic glory and his eyes spoke volumes.

"Margaret," said Casimir, as the pair reached the cobbled street and walked slowly toward the dominie's house with the whole congregation at their heels, "what was the word the Maclartys said? I do not know the Gaelic."

"The word," said Margaret, in a tense, tremulous, awe-inspired whisper, "the word was '*Hail!*'"

The Prince looked at the sunny skies with a slow lifting of his head. His eyes were fixed in a kind of vacancy, or far-seeing. He was about to say something when the figure of a man suddenly emerged from a side-lane into the cobbled street. It was Captain Kilby. He was pale as a dead man, his lips were blue and his eyes were starting from his head in a kind of demoniac fury.

He marched past them at a terrific pace, his blazing eyes unseeing and his scabbard clicking furiously as it swung wildly at his side.

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A thrill of fear penetrated Margaret's heart — fear for her prince. She suddenly remembered that the redcoat was the enemy of the Stuart. And Kilby was captain of the redcoats at Fort James!



## CHAPTER IX

### THE TRUTH ABOUT PEGGY

**O**UT in the graveyard Captain Kilby drank in the fresh air and sunshine for a few minutes. Then he set off in the direction of the doctor's cottage.

While he stepped along with the feeling of a man who, going clandestinely to his love, feels that the coast is clear, Kilby did not believe that he was playing any trick upon the doctor or stealing any march upon Peggy. In his heart, the young soldier felt that Tom Wallace was with him. They were men of the same stamp, and they understood each other. And instinct told him that Peggy Wallace loved him as he loved her.

She loved him. It needed only his strength and forcefulness and determination to overcome that peculiar reserve of hers and make her confess herself with sudden and complete

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surrender. What if she had been silent and distrait on the previous evening? He succeeded in convincing himself that woman is most unapproachable when nearest the edge of surrender. Now was his chance, and he meant to take it and laughingly apologize to the doctor when he came home from kirk and found —

It seemed as if Fate had taken a hand in the affair. Kilby had not found Fitzwilliam upon his return to the fort on the previous night. And when Kilby left for kirk that morning, Fitzwilliam was still snoring in his quarters. And now the doctor was at kirk and Peggy was alone at home — perhaps picking flowers in the garden. Also, the weather seemed to be in the conspiracy of love and love-making.

Presently the captain arrived at the gate to the doctor's flower-garden. The sun was beaming warmly on the beds, and many a blossom that had almost died in the stress of weather was lifting its head and giving forth perfume with renewed sweet courage.

The cottage seemed untenanted, but perhaps

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Peggy was inside, sitting alone, dreaming alone. It was a day for dreaming and — she must know that he was coming. She could not fail to *feel* the nearing of a heart that was so yearning in sympathy toward her own.

Like a schoolboy, he leaned against the gate. For a minute he enjoyed the prospect — the prospect of the next half hour. Presently he pursed his lips and whistled a few bars of "Black-eyed Susan," his eyes fixed upon the windows and the front door of the doctor's cottage, while the morning sun bathed the back of his neck with a sweet, urging warmth.

He had hoped that she would come out, but the windows and the door remained closed, and no Peggy appeared. Kilby laughed to himself. She knew. She must hear him whistling. She must know the whistler. She was merely pretending that she did not know, or hear; or perhaps she was watching him from behind a curtain. Instinctively he squared his shoulders and looked manly — soldierly.

Finally he lost patience and tried the front

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door with a gentle knock. Getting no response he more gently tried the handle. The door was locked.

Then he came to the unpleasant conclusion that Peggy was not at home after all!

He was quite downcast for a moment. It was aggravating that the lass herself should upset the plans which the Fates had so graciously arranged. But he was determined to find her. Where could she be? It was unusual for her not to be at kirk. She must either be ill, or feigning illness. If she was ill, then she would be in the house, and Doctor Wallace would not be at kirk either. Doctor Wallace was at kirk. Therefore, she must be feigning illness.

It was now half past eleven. Kilby knew that it would be an hour and a half before Hugh Black got through pounding the pulpit. An hour and a half to spare! Wherever Peggy was, it was certain she would be back before the kirk was out.

He sat down on a stone by the gate and whistled. It was a very public and patent act — this whistling at Peggy Wallace's gate of

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a Sunday morning. But it was Sunday, after all, and all Inverlachie was in kirk to see the Prince — all except the vanished Peggy, his own patient self, and a few impatient dogs that howled as the volume of human voices swelled and rolled from the direction of the parish kirk.

So there was Kilby, sitting by the gate in the comfortable sunshine, whistling "Black-eyed Susan" and "Sally in Our Alley" with variations — waiting for Peggy Wallace.

Had he been able to see Peggy at that moment, his whistling would have stopped abruptly. She was in Janet Glen's house, on her knees by Janet's side, and she was whispering a tale and seeking counsel of the elder woman.

Peggy did not share Inverlachie's fear of the handsome woman who nursed some strange secret in her bosom. Peggy was Peggy Wallace and she shared her father's common sense in most matters. In her woman's heart, too, Peggy understood the doctor's sweeping remark: "Fiddlesticks! She's hankering after babies — that's all!" Peggy, for this very

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reason, loved Janet. Janet was almost a mother to her in spirit, for Peggy hardly remembered her own mother, who had died of heart failure ten years before, while polishing the kitchen fender. Whenever Peggy's heart yearned for maternal presence and comfort, she instinctively went to see Janet. She needed Janet now, more than she had ever needed her.

As she approached the cottage where Janet lived she could hear a great roaring, as of a young and playful bull. Daft Willie must be visiting. Janet was mother to the idiot, too. This tender care of Janet's was another proof of her dealings with the devil. She was ower-fond o' having that half-witted thing in the house!

Daft Willie was nobody's bairn. Some years before, a band of tinkers had visited Inverlachie and pitched their tent in the old quarry. They were a bad lot and got drunk and sang and cursed and fought every night of their lives; but as long as they behaved themselves in the village in the daytime, when they tinkered pots and pans, and kept out of

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the village at night, Inverlachie cared little what else they did.

But one morning the tinkers broke camp and departed. Later in the day, Baldy Macleod, the carrier, found a bairn wailing by the roadside with his begritten, wee face purple from eating brambles. He was a tinker's bairn, about six years of age. By and by they found that the bairn was half-witted and then it was upon the hands of the parochial board.

The parochial board kept the waif for a while, but it was a thankless task. The child escaped through windows and was sometimes found in the dead of night wailing at the front door, anxious to get back to the warmth. As Daft Willie grew older he forgot to come home. He slept in the woods, under over-turned boats on the beach, in wash-houses, anywhere but in the parochial board's poor-house. He became the village "dog," and was fed and whistled and talked to for amusement by anybody and everybody. On the whole, Daft Willie led a happy-go-lucky life, and when chance failed him in the matter of

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things to eat and places to sleep, he came to his standby, Janet Glen. There was always a bite there and he could always sleep in Janet's scullery when it was cold, and all she ever asked in the way of serious obligation was that he chop sticks for the fire.

As Peggy entered, the idiot was sitting in the middle of the floor, dressed in nothing but a ragged shirt. He was not yet twelve and was stunted for his age. He had an enormous head within which abnormal brains played fantastic tricks. Janet, who had just given him a good scrubbing, was now violating the Sunday by sewing a patch into a pair of breeks. The breeks had been so often subjected to the same treatment that they were a kind of crazy-work in divers colors.

While Janet sewed the patch, Daft Willie roared some words to a mangled version of a reel tune, the while he beat time with his fists on the floor:

“ We're a' dry wi' drinkin' o' 't;  
We're a' dry wi' drinkin' o' 't;  
The minister kissed the fiddler's wife  
And couldna preach for thinkin' o' 't!”



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"Burns wrote that!" declared Daft Willie in a loud, raven-like voice. "Burns wrote it — Davie Blue, the blacksmith, tell't me Burns wrote it. Davie tell't me a whole lot o' things aboot Burns. Burns was a pote. He lived at a place ca'd Ayr an' had a lot o' lasses. Haw, haw! Davie says he was an awfu' man wi' the lasses. Burns is deid noo. Davie Blue, the blacksmith, tell't me Burns was deid. Haw, haw!

" 'We're a' dry wi' drinkin' o' 't;  
We're a' day wi' drinkin' o' 't;  
An' the minister kissed the fiddler's wife — ' "

He held the note on "wi-i-ife" until his voice cracked and his face became purple. He was finding amusement in ascertaining how long he could hold his breath. It was then that Janet looked up sadly and saw Peggy in the doorway. Janet held out the breeks to Daft Willie.

"Here!" said she. "Run ben the scullery and put them on."

"Thenk 'e," said Willie, with real gravity, and he ran off obediently.

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"Poor Willie," said Peggy, for something to say.

"Ay, poor lad," said Janet. "If he'd had some one to take care of him, instead of being an idiot he might have been a great man. In that head of his he has something which is more than the rest of him knows what to do with."

From the scullery came the excited voice:

"Burns is deid — ay, ay! But he's no deid like some folks. Some folks is deid an' that's a' there is aboot them; but some folks is deid an' the langer they're deid the mair they're no deid, for folks keep talkin' aboot them as if they wasna deid. Haw, haw! Gangy Beckett's an auld washerwoman. Davie Blue tell't Hughie Gibson, an' Ah was there when he said it. Haw, haw!"

Peggy sat down and gazed into the fire. Janet glanced at her and said nothing.

"Bonnie Prince Chairlie's the Keeng o' Scotland!" proclaimed the crazy lad in the scullery, talking to nobody in particular, the while he tied the breeks on with bits of string which he kept sacredly for the purpose. "The

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Keeng o' England's a fool. I heard Sandy McClung say't to Rob Cameron last nicht. Ah was there when he said it. There's go'ny be a war, an' Bonnie Prince Chairlie's go'ny be Keeng o' Scotland an' England. British Will tell't me that. Prince Chairlie's no deid. He's come hame. So's the sodjer — the yin wi' the dour face — him that hit me wi' the stick because Ah seen him kissin' Peggy Wallace up b' the quarry knowe yin Sunday nicht. Haw, haw!"

Peggy started, then covered her face with her hands. Janet looked slowly at her. While the mad voice yammered on in the scullery, no more was heard by the two women. All at once Peggy half rose and crept forward to Janet's side. She knelt down and buried her face in the silent woman's lap. For five minutes there was no sound but the sing-songing chatter in the scullery and Peggy's sobbing. Janet patted the girl's head absently, as a mother does a child which may not yet be asleep, and she stared into the fire with a frown on her handsome face.

In a little while Daft Willie came in from the

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scullery, attired in his breeks of many colors and patches. For a moment he stared at the figure kneeling by "Mither" Janet's side. Then he blurted out:

"Whit's she daein' — *prayin'*?"

A look of pain more than impatience crossed Janet's face. She pointed to the door. Willie was instantly crestfallen. Wringing his tattered bonnet in his hands he slouched toward the exit. Janet's heart was touched by the pathos of the poor idiot's departure.

"Willie," she said. The idiot halted and turned a face that was instantly radiant. "Come here."

He came at once. Janet reached a hand to his shoulder and drew his clean-washed face to her own. She kissed him gently on the cheek and whispered, "Now, run along and play — and keep yourself very clean."

When Willie was gone, Janet bent softly over the head that was buried in her lap. Gently she raised Peggy's face and whispered in her ear. Again there was silence. The head drooped slightly and then Peggy began to whisper, brokenly and with many pauses.

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Janet's eyes were again upon the glowing fire and her face became graver and graver. At last she said, clearly:

“And you love him — the captain?”

The answer was a wild burst of sobbing, smothered in the maternal lap. Janet let the girl sob her heart to silence. Then she bent over her and whispered long and earnestly. Finally the tear-stained face was lifted. Lips met lips in the salute of a sister to a sister in distress. Then they both arose. For a minute Peggy arranged her hair and wiped her face before a little looking-glass. Then she turned to go. Janet's arms were around her as they walked to the door. And the elder woman's last words were :

“Tell him. He is a man — a good man — a strong man.”

Kilby saw her coming before she saw him. At a glance he felt something was wrong. But he was not sure. And in a moment all things would be right. He stood before the gate with a hand on each post, his body a barrier.

She raised her eyes and saw him when

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she was but three paces away. She gave a great start, as if the material had arisen from the ghost of her thoughts. But she saw his attitude and understood its meaning instantly. Terror assailed her—the terror of the situation. It had to come, but — not yet — not yet!

“Let me pass,” she said, faintly.

“No,” he said smiling. Then he looked steadily at her face and instantly compassion overspread his, the gentle compassion of the lover, the husband.

“Peggy!” he said. “You have been crying. Oh, you poor little woman!”

Impulsively his arms sought her, to draw her to his breast and shield her. But she sprang back with a little cry of agony and tried to dart past him through the gate. She got half-way and was caught in a pair of strong arms.

“Now!” said a gentle voice, all a-thrill with love’s determination. “You must listen to me. I won’t let you go until you have heard me, unless you will promise not to stir.”

“I will listen. But let me go — please!”

He released her, surprised at the pleading

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in her voice. But she was true to her promise. She remained standing, with her hands clasped before her, her eyes drooped over her crimsoned cheeks.

He told her his story — the old story. She listened with increasing agitation. Once she lifted her eyelids with a little flutter that disclosed a new light in her eyes.

“Peggy, lass, won’t you be my lass forever and ever?” he cried in a whisper. “I want to be husband to the sweetest little wife in the world.”

“They will be coming from kirk,” she said. “It would not look well. Oh,” she cried, as she saw the persistence in his mouth. “I can’t marry you — I can’t!”

“Peggy, don’t you love me a little bit?”

“Oh, yes, I love you, but —”

That was all he needed. In a moment he had her tightly in his arms and nothing in the world — not even the congregation of the parish kirk — would have made him release her; nothing but her own next words, uttered in the desperation of the situation.

“Let me go! You do not understand. I

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love you — oh, yes! I love you as I do not deserve to be loved myself. But I cannot marry you. Please do not ask me any more.”

“Why cannot you?” he demanded, quite severely. “You love me. You have said it, and I know you *do* love me. Why cannot you marry me, then? I have the right to ask — to know.”

“What reason could there be but one? I belong — to another man.”

Kilby took a step back and stared at her.

“I do not understand,” said he, stupidly. “You love me, yet you belong to another man. What other man?”

“Major Herbert Fitzwilliam,” she said evenly. But the evenness was the prelude to a storm. The name was hardly past her lips before her face was pale and her eyes blazing wide. “And I hate him — hate him — hate him! — not so much for what he did, but for what he has stolen from you. Oh, why did you not come first, George? — George! — why did n’t you come before he did? He has stolen *you* from *me*, and I — can’t ever — be happy — again!”



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The last words came out in a series of jerky, fierce sobs. She leaned upon the gate and pressed her breast tightly against the dead wood, as if she might gain calm therefrom. Kilby hardly noticed her. He was glaring at nothing—away beyond. The laughter had gone from his lips, the joy from his heart, the light from the world! For a moment a red mist spread before him and he saw only Fitzwilliam, with the desire of murder.

But he suddenly remembered Peggy and the necessity for present word and action. He drew a long breath and turned slowly toward her. Her face was uncovered. She was looking at him, her head slightly thrown back, her teeth set, and her eyes half closed. Her face expressed a mingling of pleading for herself and the appeal for vengeance. Under his gaze, the savagery melted away and again the head lowered.

“Let us not speak any more until—until we are both more—more fit to speak,” said he, striving to down the tiger in his soul. He succeeded with the help of his own words.

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He slowly lifted his hands and laid them upon her shoulders. She did not move away, or toward him. He stepped forward and kissed her gently upon the brow. Then he turned and walked down the street, with his chin on his breast.

But no sooner had he turned the bend of the road, and was out of her sight, than the demon broke loose in the man. A horrible sound escaped through his teeth and his pace quickened into a fierce, rapid stride. Dashing out of the lane that joined the back road and the cobbled main street, he came upon a stream of people coming from kirk. At the head of the procession marched the Prince — Charles Edward — with Margaret Dalgleish upon his arm, the dominie walking proudly a few paces behind, and the entire congregation trailing behind in a long, whispering stream.

In Kilby the good people saw nothing but a fury of a man rushing in search of things to wreck, or self-destruction. The men paused and exchanged significant looks. For Captain Kilby was in command of the redcoats at Fort James, and the captain was apparently on

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the warpath. The trouble had commenced in earnest.

But Kilby was unconscious of the passing throng and of the excitement his appearance provoked. True, he was seeking something to wreck. That something was Major Herbert Fitzwilliam. Heedless of everybody and everybody's opinion, he dashed down the cobbled street toward the shore road, struck to the right and reached the military road.

Fifteen minutes later he stepped into the officers' quarters, with a naked blade in his hand and a steely madness in his eyes.

The room was empty. But on the table lay a letter, addressed to him. Before he touched it, he explored the entire fort in search of his enemy, but one of the guards told him that the major had ridden out two hours before.

Balked for the present of his vengeance, Kilby went back to the officers' room. He sat down and for half an hour remained perfectly still, with his elbows on the table and his head in his hands.

Finally, raising a haggard face in which past disaster was struggling with the savage

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anticipation of future vengeance, he saw the letter again. He seized it eagerly. It might give him a clue to the whereabouts of his quarry. The letter was written by Major Fitzwilliam, and conveyed this information:

"I am starting for Inverary at once. I have found my man and discovered his identity — his real identity. I will at once procure a warrant for his arrest from the Duke of Argyll. You are hereby ordered to see that Charles Edward Casimir does not escape, or attempt to leave Inverlachie. If he incites to any disturbance, or any disturbance is incited through his presence, apprehend Charles Edward Casimir at once. If the people will not disperse and are too strong — *fire upon them!*"

## CHAPTER X

### THE STRONGHOLD OF THE DUKE

**S**HORTLY after noon on that Sunday, Fitzwilliam arrived at Inverary, having ridden horse to St. Catherine and ferried across the loch to the clachan and castle on the western shore.

The duke was at kirk, asleep in his own reserved pew, and snoring somewhat louder than was seemly, even during a Scots sermon. But the duke was the duke. As Swinburne might have written in later years:

The pew of Argyll is his stronghold:  
The snore of Argyll is his law.

His real stronghold was some distance to the north of the clachan — a castle set in the middle of a big, wooded park, starred with great chestnuts and elms, beneath which fine Highland cattle browsed. Behind were the rugged mountains. Their shadows blackened

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the loch, which was mirror-like in its shelter from the north winds.

Fitzwilliam leisurely strolled along the rough road toward the castle. Allied as the Campbell clan was with the English government, a redcoat was not looked upon with any great favor, even in Inverary. The Campbells and English had fought side by side against Scotland, but the Campbells took unto themselves the glory of having defeated their rightful king, and a redcoat was like an usurper of that doubtful glory.

The clachan was remarkably busy, particularly for a Sunday. The population seemed suddenly to have swelled. There were more people in the village than there seemed cottages to house them. Fitzwilliam, who knew his Inverary, wondered at the air of activity, while he felt uneasy. But he laughed presently at his uneasiness. This was the Campbell stronghold, and a Jacobite rising here was as improbable as sudden millennium. Still, he could not imagine what so many strangers were doing in Inverary — strangers wearing tartans of the north.

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Fitzwilliam went past the old cross of Inverary, which looks out over the sea. He presently passed through the gates of the castle lands. He smiled as he observed a number of stout posts which studded the wooded park. The smile was reminiscent of a story which had set London laughing. It appeared that the duke's cattle had developed an itch and had damaged the fine trees by scratching themselves against the bark. The duke, more for economy than humanity, decided that it would prove cheaper to provide posts for the cattle to scratch themselves upon. Hence, these famous scratching-posts.

What set London laughing was that the Highlanders of Inverary—the notoriously unwashed Campbell—had used the posts with the cattle. The funny story had gone forth through the world of anecdote when a strapping “Hielandman” was observed rubbing the small of his back against a post and muttering in his exquisite delight:

“Gott pless ta Tewk of Arkyll!”

An hour later, when the duke returned from kirk, he found Major Fitzwilliam await-

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ing him in a big, cozy room, matted with shaggy Highland cattle-hides and deer-skins. The walls were adorned with trophies of the chase, mingled with old flint-locks and relics of the house of Campbell for centuries. Fitzwilliam, in whose veins flowed the English strain of racial brotherhood and fairness in fight, had been studying the relics with mingled feelings.

To Fitzwilliam the cause of England<sup>1</sup> was the cause of right; yet he could not smother a feeling of contempt for the great clan which had sold its brother clans, its racial birthright, and its rightful king, for the sake of broad acres and English preferment. The massacre of Glencoe and other Campbell perpetrations on fellow countrymen were not to be forgotten, even by the race over the border which had profited by them.

The duke—a heavy man with a small, keen eye set in a large head—listened in silence to Fitzwilliam's tale of Charles Edward. The duke expressed no surprise, but it was apparent that he was deeply interested. When Fitzwilliam had finished, concluding



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with his request for a legal warrant, so that the man could be arrested without waiting for him to commit an overt act, the duke merely grunted and went about the business of making out the warrant.

When he had signed and sealed it, his Grace deliberately folded the document and laid it aside on the table. Then he cleared his throat and made a little speech to the major.

"Sir," said he, "I commend your zeal. I had already been informed of this man's presence in Inverlachie. There is little happens in Argyll that is not brought to my ears by a little bird.

"Nevertheless, I am glad of confirmation of the report which reached me yesterday. It was something of a surprise then, but it was also a relief. The shipwreck and the involuntary landing of the man in my country simplifies a number of matters. Indeed, I might say the problem which has confronted those in authority in Scotland for some time has solved itself. The Stuart incident is already closed.

"For a time, I may tell you, my dear

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Major, we have been in suspense. For a time the matter was serious. There was a restlessness among the Macdonalds and the Grants and Stuarts and their kind. Upon inquiry I learned that a rumor had come to Scotland of the return of a Pretender to the throne of Scotland. Of course, you understand that any man who establishes his right to the throne of Scotland also establishes his right to the crown of England.

“At the same time the authorities in London, and my secret agents, discovered a French plot having its tentacles throughout Europe and even across the seas among the American rebels. The Corsican scoundrel was the master mind which conceived it.

“England having entered into an alliance with Russia, the Corsican rogue at once declared war on Russia. He diverted England’s strength by a threatened invasion of her own shores, the inference being drawn that as soon as he had beaten Russia he would turn upon England.

“In order that he might fight Russia and England, one at a time, he engineered the

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new revolt in the American colonies. With England staying at home preparing her defenses against the threatened invasion, and such of her troops as she could spare doing battle against the American hirelings of the Corsican blackguard, it only requires a flash in the pan to make the situation in Scotland seem ominous. Had Napoleon been in the game seventy years ago, the '45 might have been another story. Let us give thanks to God, my dear Major, that Napoleon was not!

"If my information is correct, it was Napoleon who conceived the Jacobite rising. It was he who found the scion of that once-royal family which the Campbells had the honor to drive from Scotland. It is he who has sent him here. Charles Edward was to have met certain of the northern chieftains — Cameron of Lochiel, and others — in Glasgow. The certain chieftains, one of whom I have named, left the north two weeks ago. For the past week they have been awaiting the arrival of the ship which is wrecked, and the man who was washed ashore at Inverlachie.

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“As this late bard of Ayrshire puts it —

“ ‘The best laid schemes o’ mice and men  
Gang aft agley!’

“— and the fine barrier reef called the Antlers was the hand of God. Now the man is in my lands, in my hands, and he is as helpless as an orphan calf at the kitchen door. I’ll nip it in the bud!”

The duke stopped talking and beamed upon Fitzwilliam. Presently he scanned the warrant with the air of a man who is pleased with himself.

“Nip it in the bud,” he murmured.

He handed the warrant to Fitzwilliam, who saluted and, after a glance, slipped the document into a breast-pocket.

“Nothing like being regular, my dear Major,” said the duke. “To apprehend this pretender by English soldiery and under martial law is too great an honor for a man in whose veins there is nothing but whisky. Also, such an act would put upon the incident an importance which we do not wish to confess before the chieftains of the north.

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We will arrest him, my dear Major, as we would a vagrant, a street roisterer, a drunken tinker who is like to disturb the peace of our lord the king, his crown and dignity.

"There!" said he, rising, "let us consider the Jacobite scheme nipped in the bud. Let us dismiss it from our minds. You will be my guest, my dear Major, and to-morrow you will witness the gathering of the clans. It is an annual event — an idea of my own for welding the chains of friendship between my people and the clans of the north — my own idea!"

"How does it succeed?" Fitzwilliam asked, eaten with sudden curiosity.

"Succeed?" echoed the duke, a little non-plused. "Ah — er — it will take time, of course. At present the chieftains of the north do not pay their respects as they should, but their clans are disbanded and many of the Stuarts and Macdonalds and Grants and Camerons are in Argyll. These attend the annual gathering. You will see them to-morrow, and you may profit by your observations. You will have an opportunity to

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observe the position in which I stand toward them, and to reflect upon the utter improbability of a Jacobite rising succeeding. I dine at noon on Sundays," he concluded abruptly, as a great bell clanged through the castle.

So Fitzwilliam remained overnight as a guest of the Duke of Argyll in the Campbell stronghold. In the early dawn of the next day the major was awakened by a terrific blast of pipes. Peering out of the window, he saw a group of Macleans assembled on the drive before the castle, their pipers blowing lustily.

Presently discord was sounded by the approach of another band of Highlanders (of another sept), their pipes also raised in a pibroch. Five minutes later there were four different groups before the castle and four different pipe bands playing four different clan marches. It was pandemonium — something like what hell might be if it blew up and all the lost souls yelled for liberty.

Fitzwilliam felt a pang of fear at the horrible sound. It somehow suggested the turbulent spirit which might drive, screaming,

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across the border. One thing he noticed with elation was that the pipers of each group tried to outvie the others, and the eyes that glared over inflated cheeks were filled with jealousy, if not actual hatred. Ha! It was this clan jealousy which lost Culloden for the Stuart cause.

Presently the duke appeared. He shook hands with the leader of each group, being careful to give precedence by arrival. He was also careful to give precisely two shakes to each, and to pay exactly the same compliment in the same number of words to each leader. Any divergence from this rule would have provoked ill-feeling and a quarrel—bloodshed, perhaps—after a day's sulking.

Fitzwilliam dressed and went down to the big dining-room where he had sat at the board with the duke on the previous day. The duke was drinking a health (and a return health) with each and every leader of each and every clan-sept. Already, Fitzwilliam noted, the duke's face was flushed and his words somewhat thick. But the major thought he understood the situation, and ac-

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corded the duke his sympathy. It was warm work so soon after breakfast.

By ten o'clock about one thousand clansmen (besides the two thousand Campbells of Argyll) had assembled in the park, and by ten o'clock (to be brief about an unpleasant truth) the Duke of Argyll was feeling the effects of his many compulsory potations.

Now, one of the set rules of this gathering was that, after the duke had greeted each sept individually, he must mount his horse, review the entire *ensemble* in the park, and make a speech. The duke's charger was brought up before the castle. Argyll came unsteadily down the steps with a Highlander on each side of him (ostensibly an escort), and attempted to mount. He put his left foot in the right stirrup; then, realizing the ludicrous position this mounting would bring him into, he walked to the other side of the horse and put his right foot in the left stirrup!

It required tact to get his Grace into the saddle with his face toward the front. As he rode off the Highland servitors clung one to each stirrup — an escort of honor, of course!



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The duke, realizing just how badly off he was in the matter of sobriety, lifted his chin in the air with the oversolemnity of a man who would hide his inebriety. As he appeared before the assembled clansmen he had the air of a Don Quixote who is particularly interested in his own sublime thoughts. Presently he collected himself sufficiently to begin his address. It was unfortunate from the beginning, which was untactful, to say the least:

“Campbells of Argyll,” said he, adding as an afterthought, “*and others!*”

There was a mixed grinning and scowling. The duke then went on to speak of the glory of Scotland, Argyll in particular. He spoke of the glorious traditions of the Campbells — which was particularly unfortunate. Just as the duke began to forget that he was addressing men and not household vassals and, under the belief that the three thousand were tenants, warned them against cattle-plague and against poaching and the destruction of the forests, Sir David Campbell, one of his staff, made a frantic signal to the pipe major.

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Next moment the duke's address was drowned in the drone of a hundred pipers.

But the duke, who thought the droning was in his own head, went on talking, although not a word could be heard. Fitzwilliam, in the meantime, was watching a Highlander, who, without bonnet or coat, was coming at a run across the park from the clachan.

The man rushed up to the side of the duke, whose eyes were still fixed on the heavens and whose lips were moving in vain articulation. The Highlander shouted something which made the duke start hazily and look unsteadily around him. The man again shouted in his ear. Argyll turned white as a sheet, looked helplessly at Sir David and Major Fitzwilliam, and finally waved a feeble hand toward the redcoat.

In a second the excited messenger was at Fitzwilliam's side:

"Sir," he cried above the storm of pipe music, "Inverlachie is aflame. Charles Edward has raised his standard!"

The words were no sooner out of the man's mouth than sobriety seemed to come back to

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the Duke of Argyll. He suddenly stiffened up in his saddle, waved a hand to Sir David and Fitzwilliam, and spurred his horse toward the castle. Fitzwilliam and Sir David Campbell followed, while the pipe music stopped and a whispering suddenly swelled into babbling, then roaring, cheering, jeering, hissing, and shouting.

Before an hour had passed there was pandemonium in Inverary. The clansmen were quarreling, fighting, insulting one another, and raking up old grievances. Before night hundreds of them were on their way, by St. Catherine, to Inverlachie. Down the loch the skies were bright from a dozen bonfires in the affected town.

In the library of the castle the duke, half-sober but almost insanely nervous, was facing Fitzwilliam and Sir David Campbell. The man was trying to collect his wits to face the emergency.

"Listen to me! Listen to me!" said he. "You — Major Fitzwilliam — ride back to Inverlachie — alone — you understand? Arrest this man like you would a brawler — as

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if you were unconscious of his claims. That will discourage them more than a regiment. You — Sir David! — cut off the glens to the north, so adherents can neither come to him nor he go to them. Do ye not see? The man's trapped. He could not have raised his standard in a worse place. He's trapped. He's nipped in the bud. Now, go! — quick! — both of ye!"

## CHAPTER XI

### THE CALL OF THE BLOOD

**L**IEUTENANT YORKE paced the guard-room of Fort James. He was much agitated. Ever and anon he would peer through the window at the glare over Inverlachie, or open the door and listen, with anxiously drawn brows, to the hum of voices that came on the wind from the direction of the village. If this went on he would presently be called upon to act on his own initiative. He would have no hesitation about doing it; indeed, he hoped that circumstances would force him to act, for so might he win his spurs. But this was serious — so serious that he felt he must give the captain a chance to return and decide the course of action. Inverlachie was up in arms. The Jacobite spirit was rampant. Pipes were blaring war slogans, and bonfires were blazing in open defiance of law, order, and loyalty to the British crown.

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Where the deuce was Kilby? What was the matter with Kilby, anyway? All Sunday he had been as silent as a madman with some desperate scheme in his twisted brains. He had walked aimlessly about the fort, occasionally coming to a standstill with his fists clenched and his eyes fixed on vacancy. Once he went off into the hills and did not return until after dark — long after dark.

Something had happened in Kilby's life. Lieutenant Yorke knew that as surely as he knew that his own first name was Richard. He had heard the captain walking about the guardroom all night. Once he had heard him sigh and mutter something to himself. Monday morning had found him no better, save that the captain had climbed the point of rocks and had watched the St. Catherine road with a kind of fierce, tense impatience.

Later in the day Kilby's patience seemed to become exhausted. He had gruffly ordered that his horse be saddled, and in the afternoon he had ridden out on that road which he had been watching all morning. He had not returned yet.

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He had no sooner ridden off than things began to develop in Inverlachie. The kind of things that developed made Yorke half fancy that there was method in Kilby's apparent madness. The captain must have anticipated trouble of some sort. The captain was probably expecting — impatiently awaiting — Major Fitzwilliam's return from Inverary for the same reason that Yorke now awaited Kilby's return. This was a matter which called for responsibility in action. Yorke shirked it because of the weight involved; perhaps Kilby, himself, felt that superior authority would lessen the possibility of error or fiasco.

Yes, that was it! Kilby had gone out to meet Fitzwilliam and hurry him back. All the more reason why Lieutenant Yorke should delay action until they arrived. But —

He looked out of the window and shook his head. Bonfires were springing up on the other side of the loch. The Highlanders were passing the ancient signal of fire. At this very moment a messenger might be riding

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through the northern glens, waving a fiery cross — the cross that blazed war — red war! And Yorke knew that the time was extremely propitious for any sort of rising against England.

Much had happened in Inverlachie of which Lieutenant Yorke knew little, and Captain Kilby nothing at all. Monday had broken quiet and clear. Before the sun was well up a dozen strangers rode into the village and down the cobbled street. After a few guarded questions, put to persons who were, if anything, over-voluble in their replies, the strangers rode up to the square, whitewashed house on the hill, hitched their horses to the gate, and marched inside.

Within Jamie Dalglish's house a strange scene was presently enacted. A huge man, clad in a broadcloth coat, tartan trews, and with a Cameron plaid brooches to his shoulder, appeared before Margaret and bowed stiffly. He was followed by six other big men, each with tartan somewhere about his person, and each bit of tartan speaking of a different clan.



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"He is here," said the Cameron abruptly.  
"Lead us to him, lass."

Margaret, frightened as she was, felt a thrill of joy ripple through her veins. She knew instantly who and what these men were. She was a little disappointed that they did not appear in all the splendor of kilts, sporrans, dirks, claymores, and feathers, but — times were changed, although the spirit was unaltered.

She led the way to the "stewdy," where her father was closeted with Charles Edward. She knocked timidly. Dalgleish opened the door and stood aside. For a moment the dominie's face went white. Then his eyes glowed and he waved an inviting arm to the strangers. They filed in one by one, lined up in silence before the royal figure, which rose at their approach. For a moment seven pairs of eyes surveyed the figure, while Casimir's gaze slowly moved over the seven faces.

Then the Cameron stepped forward, dropped on one knee, took Casimir's left hand in his two great hairy fists and reverently kissed it. The other six did likewise. Then the Cam-

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eron waved Dalglish and Margaret from the room.

The dominie closed the door softly after him and went into the kitchen, his hands out before him like a blind man feeling his way. He shut the kitchen door behind him and Margaret; then the big, rugged man burst into tears — tears of pure racial exultation.

“Marg’ret! Marg’ret!” he cried in a choked whisper. “They have come. The die is cast. There is no going back. They have come. That is Cameron of Lochiel — the great Cameron. And another is the Macgregor — the great-grandson of Rob Roy. And another is the Macdonald, and I would suspect the others by their tartan. In my house — Marg’ret! — these great men of Scotland in my house!”

Poor old dominie! The honor and pride of it were too much for his racial emotions. His eyes shed tears while they glared. His face was shining wet while it was radiant; for was not he the man who had sheltered the Prince until the great men of Scotland found him?

The eight men were closeted for two hours.

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Finally the door of the "stewdy" was opened, and Margaret's heart shook as she heard the voice of Charles Edward saying in clear, resonant tones :

"Ay, summon the men of the North. I will lead them! In two days the city of Glasgow shall be mine. In four days — Edinburgh! Then, *over the border!*"

James Dalgleish could no more keep that speech to himself than he could keep cool. In an hour it was being repeated on every tongue in the village. Before noon a lone piper was blowing his might and main in the cobbled street. British Will, mad with dramatic impulse and "Gangy" Beckett's private stock, was clanging his bell and announcing to the heavens the very words Casimir had uttered to the chieftains of the north.

That was enough. In one minute Inverlachie went mad. Davie Blue struck his anvil with his sledge hammer, broke the haft, pitched the fragments where they chose to fall, whipped off his burned leathern apron, and went to join the clamoring throng. Sandy McClung, returning home from Dugie Warner's funeral,

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did not stop to take off his funereal clothes, but went to "Gangy" Beckett's clearing-house of town talk.

Late in the afternoon a boat grated on the beach, and a dozen Highlanders in full war dress appeared as one great interrogation point. The sight of the national dress did the rest. Every man donned the kilt and plaid and appeared in the streets, drunk with Jacobitism!

By nightfall the village was stark, staring mad. The air dinned with the shrieking of a dozen pipes. The Highlanders arrived from Inverary in boat loads. British Will was making frenzied speeches at street corners, gathering his audiences with his bell. Doctor Wallace was in the throng, too much amazed at what was going on in the big world to realize that Peggy had gone about her work in silence all day.

By eight o'clock in the evening, Davie Blue, the five Maclarty brothers (who seemed suddenly to have found their tongues), and others had dragged fire-wood and tar to the top of the old castle hill, where at one time Mary, Queen of Scots, had been hidden for a week. Pres-

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ently a great bonfire was casting its red radiance over the loch. From other peaks — mainly to the north — came answering fires. At that Cameron of Lochiel chuckled.

“They will be here before morning,” said he to the Macgregor.

From the fort window Lieutenant Yorke stared in growing amazement and with increasing impatience. Where was Kilby?

About nine o'clock there came a thunder of hoofs on the wooden floor inside the fort gateway. Kilby appeared on a steaming, foaming horse. He had ridden the last two miles at a terrific gallop, for he had seen the blaze and understood.

“Thank God, you’ve come!” cried Yorke. “What are your orders?”

Kilby dismounted, staggered slightly, and clutched at the saddle for support. It was then that Yorke observed his appearance. The captain’s face was discolored and bloody. The hand that grasped the saddle was broken over the knuckles and blood was trickling between the fingers. Kilby apparently had been out on active service.

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“ Muster the company! Serve ammunition — quick! ”

Fifteen minutes later a crowd rushed up the cobbled street toward the schoolhouse with a great, fierce cry:

“ The redcoats! The redcoats are coming! The redcoats! ”

They were met by another crowd rushing from the other end of the village, also toward the schoolhouse. The second mob had a different tale on its vociferous lips:

“ The Campbells! — the damned traitorous Campbells! — blocked the glens to the north and the Stuarts are cut off! ”

But worse than all was the word that came to Margaret's ears at the kitchen door. Janet Glen suddenly appeared before her, and whispered between gasps for breath:

“ Fitzwilliam — returning with a warrant for the man's arrest — I know — I saw it with my eyes shut — Kilby — ”

What she meant to say was that Fitzwilliam, returning, had met Kilby where the road skirted the old quarry knowe, and that Fitzwilliam now lay bleeding and unconscious in

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the ditch with the warrant for Charles Edward in his pocket.

But Margaret stopped to hear no more. She rushed unceremoniously to the "stewdy" door and entered without knocking. The Prince started to his feet from the fireside, where he had been brooding.

"Margaret!" he cried.

There was something in the tone that drove from her mind every thought of what she had come to say — to warn him about.

"My Prince!" she cried, brokenly.

Before either of them knew how it happened — save that it was the call of instinct and blood — their lips were together, clinging in one long, sweet, understanding kiss.

The clock ticked exultantly in the kitchen. Then a man's sob broke the tense stillness. Casimir drew himself away from her abruptly. He sank into the chair by the fireside, covered his face with his hands, and groaned:

"Margaret! My poor little Margaret!"

## CHAPTER XII

### WIT, WAR, AND DIPLOMACY

**B**ESIDE the bonfire in the middle of the cobbled street, between the dominie's place and the schoolhouse, stood the Macgregor, Cameron of Lochiel, the Macdonald, and the other chieftains, surrounded by the excited crowd. The redcoats were coming. What now?

"Let them come!" said the Cameron, with a fierce laugh. "We may as well begin here as there."

"Canny, man — canny!" cautioned the Macgregor, with all the cunning of his race. "If 't is true that Argyll has cut off the glens, we might as well try to fetch down yon moon as make open fight. Let the redcoat talk first."

"He'll do that, never fear!" said the Cameron, a fling of his plaid expressive of his contempt for diplomatic measures.



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There came a clatter of horses' hoofs and the steady tramp of military feet on cobblestones. Into the glare of the bonfire came two horsemen, Captain Kilby and Lieutenant Yorke, followed by a company of redcoats, marching four abreast.

The command to halt rang out. There was a little skirmishing of horse hoofs and a rattling of arms, which somehow conveyed the serious, mechanical determination of the English soldiers. Kilby suddenly wheeled his horse, and himself faced the mob. In the light of the bonfire his countenance was revealed, to the startled wonder of all, especially of Doctor Wallace, who could not for the life of him imagine what had befallen the smiling, boyish captain. It was the face of a fierce warrior, already grimed with battle, that looked over the horse's head.

"People of Inverlachie!" cried Captain Kilby. "I order you to disperse to your homes!"

There was a murmur, then silence, but not a man moved to obey.

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“Once more — I order you to disperse to your homes!” came the warning.

The crowd moved nervously, but still unobeying the letter of the command. The mob gradually worked around behind Cameron of Lochiel and the Macgregor and the little knot of chiefs. This left the Cameron and the Macgregor in the front, the former standing defiantly with his arms folded and one hand drawing the plaid tightly across his breast, while the Macdonald stood in an easy attitude of mingled amusement and interest.

“For the third and last time!” cried Kilby, with infinite regret in his voice, “I order you, people of Inverlachie, in the name of his Majesty King George, to disperse to your homes. If you do not obey, I shall order my men to fire a volley. Will you disperse?”

There was no answer. The crowd looked expectantly toward the knot of chieftains. Cameron of Lochiel had never moved. He was like a rigid statue. It was the Macgregor who broke the silence, just as Kilby’s hand moved on his horse’s bridle-rein.

“And why must we disperse, if ’t is a fair

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question? — which I will be thinking it is!" he demanded.

"I do not think it necessary to answer the question," replied Kilby, himself glad of an excuse to delay procedure. "The people are gathered in a manner that tends to a disturbance of the peace. They must disperse."

"I have heard nothing of a riot," said the Macgregor simply.

"Then why are the people assembled to-night?" demanded the captain pointedly. "Why these bonfires? Why the pipes? What is the meaning of the man with the bell? And why is every man dressed in the national costume. What, pray, is the occasion?"

"What is the occasion?" echoed the Macgregor, with a laugh.

"Occasion enough, as ye will learn" — began Cameron of Lochiel, suddenly flinging his plaid from his clutch, like a mystery casting off the veil.

"The occasion!" came from the Macgregor in an interrupting, drowning roar, "is such

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as you might have understood, Sir Redcoat, if ye had exercised your brains for a moment. Ye would have forgotten that this is the day of the annual gathering of the clans in Argyll. Is it not the wish of his Grace, the duke, that this day be one of bonfires and rejoicing?"

For this unexpected explanation Kilby had no answer ready. He knew perfectly well it was a subterfuge. But what could he say? This might well be the reason for everything — the pipe music, the bonfires, the strange Highlanders, the national dress, but —

"The gathering was not here," said he. "It was held at Inverary."

"And is enthusiasm so weak that it cannot travel twenty miles?" demanded the Macgregor with sarcasm. "Is friendship so forgotten that the clansmen could not ferry across to greet their acquaintances in Inverlachie? Sir Redcoat, I think ye hunt a mare's nest!"

"Sir Highlandman," retorted Kilby, "we are wasting words. You know as well as I do that there is more than loyalty to the duke

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in this gathering to-night. Also, remember that I am neither deaf nor blind."

"Now we are making riddles!" sneered the Macgregor.

As he said this, a queer, choked voice began to sing in the bonfire. It was a verse of that taunt of the victorious Prince Charlie at Prestonpans, under the window of the vanquished Sir John Cope —

"Hey, Johnny Cope, are ye waukin' \* yet!"

Sandy McClung was in the crowd. Kilby's face flushed scarlet, even beneath the blood and discoloration of his late battle with Fitzwilliam.

"I warn you again. At the first overt act or seditious speech, I shall not only disperse this crowd by force, but I shall apprehend the Pretender who is responsible for this demonstration."

"The Pretender — hey?" queried the Macgregor. "Where have I heard that name before? And what, prithee, has Charles Edward done in Inverlachie? Is a man to suf-

\* Awake.

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'fer for a mother's fancy at the christening? What warrants ye to arrest the man?"

At the word "warrants" Kilby started and became silent. He saw instantly the weak point in his attitude. He could not arrest Charles Edward without strong grounds. The man had kept very much to himself, and he was not among the crowd. He had no direct grounds for accusing him of being the inciter of this gathering.

He suddenly remembered, too, that Fitzwilliam's mission to Inverary had been to procure a warrant that would bridge this weak gap in the position. Like a flash it came to Kilby that in the fury of his meeting with Fitzwilliam on the road by the quarry knowe, he had forgotten his duty as a soldier in the intensity of his passion as a man. Before his mind's eye, as he sat his horse in that halo of firelight, there came a momentary vision of Fitzwilliam lying bloody, battered, and senseless in the ditch by the quarry, with the warrant for Charles Edward Casimir in his breast-pocket. Kilby had never thought of that until this moment.

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The mocking clang of British Will's bell brought him back to the present scene with a start. His anger rose as a titter of mockery rippled through the mob.

"I will arrest him in any event, if the people do not at once disperse!" said he sternly. "Come, my good people. I do not wish to be an instrument to the destruction of innocent lives. *Disperse!*"

The Macgregor, who had been watching the captain with the eye of a Highland eagle, robbed the words of their thunder by saying coolly:

"Under all the circumstances, ye cannot arrest Charles Edward on suspicion, unless ye have a warrant. Of course, if ye have —"

Kilby, caught, turned upon the chieftain angrily.

"Enough of this talk! The man is a claimant to the crown of Scotland, and you know it!"

"Huh!" came in an explosive cluck from Cameron of Lochiel. "The redcoat admits there is a crown of Scotland."

"Tut!" exclaimed the Macgregor impa-

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tiently, and with an apologetic wave of his hand to Kilby. "That is child's talk. Let us reason together.

"Sir," said he respectfully to the captain, "have you heard this Charles Edward claim that he is a Stuart, or that he is a claimant to the crown of Scotland?"

Kilby sat his horse in silence and impatience. (Must he, after all, be compelled to fire upon them?) The Macgregor, receiving no answer, turned to the people of Inverlachie.

"Have any of you heard any such wild talk?"

"No! No!" "Did you ever?" "Of course not!" came as a series of sarcastic negatives.

"In that case," said the Macgregor, with mock sympathy for the captain, "I will be thinking if the redcoat would apprehend James Dalgleish's guest, he would better produce his warrant."

It was so cleverly done, and the ultimatum so subtly conveyed, not only to Kilby but to the mob, that the captain was nonplused for a moment. The instant had come when he



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must order his men to fire. Dignity would not permit of another command to disperse. Another "final" warning would smack of the ridiculous.

Kilby suddenly wheeled his horse and rode to the end of the line of redcoats. He cleared his throat nervously, but, when he spoke, his voice was clear and stern.

"Ready! Front rank, kneel! Rear rank —"

"One minute, Captain!" said a quiet, cheery voice.

It was Doctor Wallace. He stepped into the halo of the bonfire and touched his hat to Kilby, while his honest face strove to maintain a good-natured smile.

Captain Kilby stopped short in his commands. But already the front rank of redcoats was kneeling and the guns were ready to deliver their volley. Wallace's smile deepened as he regained his professional calm, long practiced in emergency.

"Captain Kilby and gentlemen," said he, half humorously, "I don't want to have any more broken heads to mend than comes

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strictly in the course of daily casualty. I think, perhaps, there is a misunderstanding on both sides here, and I would rather prevent than extract bullets."

There was a bit of a laugh at this sally. Even Kilby and the redcoats smiled at the audacious little doctor in the line of fire.

"I would suggest," continued the doctor, "that the people, while not necessarily dispersing to their homes, take some definite stand in this matter. If they have any grievance against King George, or his redcoats, of course it would be as well to fight it out here and now. If they have n't any grievance that cannot be adjusted without lead pills, then it would be more seemly to observe law and better order until whatever is itching them shapes itself more definitely.

"I don't presume to tell the captain his duty or his business, except as it may touch upon possible surgical operations, but I would say that if he has no warrant for anybody's arrest, or grounds upon which to make an arrest without a warrant, it might be better for mutual respect and good-feeling if he —

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as representing the dignity of the government and the army — observe the letter of the law and the strict order of procedure.”

Some applause followed this bit of oratory. Already the tension was broken. Both sides were inclined to laugh rather than fight.

“Speaking for myself,” said the doctor in his genial way, “I haven’t heard this Mr. Casimir say anything, nor have I seen him do anything, that might be construed into a claim of royal identity. He may be Bonnie Prince Charlie himself for all I know, but it strikes me the case is like that one the minister argued yesterday morning — ‘*Thou sayest it!*’ — although, to tell you the truth, I don’t know myself just what Holy Hugh was driving at, and I have an idea Hughie did n’t know himself where to strike the line between good theology and bad logic.”

There was downright laughter at this. There was something so genial about the sudden appearance and sermon of the little doctor that the serious side of matters was completely eclipsed. The doctor, who had been talking to the mob as he would have

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done to divert a man's mind from a leg which was about to be sawn off, perceived the effect of his speech. He finished his work of art with a bold stroke. While they were still laughing over Holy Hugh's "good theology and bad logic," the doctor suddenly lost patience.

"Fiddlesticks!" said he. "Let's go home!"

In another moment the tension was past, the danger averted, bloodshed avoided, and the crowd was breaking up, laughing. Both Kilby and the doctor heaved a sigh of relief. Wallace smiled at the captain and turned away. As he walked out of the halo of light, he saw a face looking at him from the dim half-light beyond. It was a woman's face, and the eyes were shining with tears and admiration.

"That you, Janet?" said the doctor. "This is no place for women — only children."

"I — I heard you!" she gasped. "Oh! —"

"Janet," said the doctor, taking her arm and striving to speak lightly, "let me see you home!"

## CHAPTER XIII

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**T**HE situation was temporarily relieved, but only about half of the people went home. And Kilby, as the aggressor, could not leave the field as yet. He ordered his men into a less militant attitude, and expressed his willingness to talk with the chieftains.

"So long as authority is not defied," he said, "and the people observe order, I am forced to accept your explanation of the gathering of to-night. In the meantime," he added, "I wish to speak a few words with the man whose name is Charles Edward Casimir."

Cameron of Lochiel looked at the Macgregor; the Macgregor looked at the Macdonald; and all the chieftains looked at one another. The old instinct revolted against

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plebeian intercourse with the king, and they were the king's self-appointed body-guard.

They drew aside and conversed for a few minutes. Cameron of Lochiel was for point-blank refusal of the request; but the Macgregor was still for diplomacy.

"Remember," he said, "that the Campbell has the King in his hands this night. We must keep up the farce of innocence. We will gain thereby. Let him see Charlie. We have seen him. We have spoken with him. He will handle this young redcoat with a tongue that is smoother than his. Our King has been to France!"

Cameron of Lochiel, the only stern opposition, finally agreed to the interview on the condition that he, at least, be present thereat. This led to the ancient Highland bickering over precedence. If Cameron of Lochiel must be present, they must all be present.

Finally the clarified and amended proposition was put to Kilby, who had been sitting on his horse, smiling bitterly at the obvious pretense of it all. He knew as well as he knew his head ached that the propriety of his being

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ushered into a king's presence was being discussed by the chieftains of Scotland's ancient clans.

When they brought back a condescending and conditioned affirmative to his request, he dismounted and followed them to Dalgleish's house, wondering just what he wanted to see Charles Edward about, and what he would have to say to him. His real reason for wishing to interview the man was to see him for himself, study his features, hear him converse, and learn what manner of man this was who had stirred a revolt in Scotland.

Jamie Dalgleish himself opened the front door as they approached. The dominie had watched the whole exciting passage from the front room window, ready, should the outbreak become serious, to report to the Prince.

"Well?" said he, barring the door with his body at sight of the redcoat.

"Mister Dalgleish," said Cameron of Lochiel, with emphasis on the "Mister," "this redcoat gentleman is curious to see a guest of yours about whom he is much fashed. We have consented —"

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"We felt sure you would beg him to pardon our intrusion," interrupted the Macgregor. "But the matter seems of great importance to the captain here, who, however, is too much of a gentleman to occasion your guest any embarrassment while he remains under your worthy roof."

The dominie caught the Macgregor's significance at once. He stood aside and bowed. The nine men, led by Dalgleish, filed into the hall. Dalgleish tiptoed along the lobby to the "stewdy" door, and tapped twice. A voice — a soft voice — answered:

"Come in!"

Dalgleish opened the door respectfully and looked inside. All at once he turned to the chieftains, blankly amazed, and blocked the door. Kilby gently pushed him aside, and stepped into the "stewdy," the chieftains following close at his heels, ready and suspicious.

There was no one else in the room but Margaret. She had been sitting on a stool by the fire. As she arose, it was apparent that she had been crying. For a moment there was stupefied silence. Then all eyes turned



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upon the dominie. He was still staring like a man who is as amazed as a man can be at anything strange happening in his own house.

"Where — where is the Prince?" he stammered, forgetting the need for suppression of that title.

Kilby smiled. It was a farce. Margaret turned a little pale at the name, uttered in the presence of a redcoat; but she answered as if she knew to whom the dominie referred,

"He is gone," she said quietly.

"Gone! Gone where? How?"

"I do not suppose he saw any reason to go through the window, or by the back door!" said Margaret, with a flash of impatience; "nor do I know exactly how he went, save that he went."

"How long ago was this?" asked Kilby.

Margaret did not answer until Cameron of Lochiel nodded his head. Then she said:

"About half an hour ago."

"Do you know where he went?" asked Kilby.

"I am under no requirement to report the

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movements of my father's guests," said Margaret, with a little toss of her head.

"M-m-m-m! Beg pardon, madam," said Kilby, with a ghost of a smile. He wondered why she had been crying. The tears were still shining on her cheeks.

The captain slowly surveyed the chieftains. They were all as stolid in expression as sphinxes, but there was a twinkle in every eye — a twinkle of satisfaction.

In the momentary silence that followed, there came a sharp rap at the front door. The dominie started and glanced at Margaret. But she did not share his sudden alarm that the Prince had returned. Reassured by her eyes, Dalglish went to the door. A gruff voice said:

"I have a message to deliver to Captain Kilby. May I enter?"

The dominie ushered in a redcoat, who saluted and handed a folded paper to Kilby. The captain spread it open and read:

TO CAPTAIN KILBY, — During your dereliction from duty the man has slipped away under

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your very nose. You will consider yourself under my orders, and return at once with your men to the fort.

HERBERT FITZWILLIAM,  
*Major.*

Kilby crushed the offensive missive in the palm of his right hand. For a moment he stood irresolute. His desire was to return at once to the fort, and complete the thrashing he had given Fitzwilliam. But the military tone of the note, in spite of its slur, left him no course but that of obedience to his superior officer. It was apparent that the superior officer had seen nothing for Kilby but obedience as a soldier, and it might be suspected that Fitzwilliam intended to profit by it.

Kilby saluted the chieftains, bowed to Margaret, and left the house without a word. The moment the door closed the chieftains woke up, and flashed significant glances at one another. What was in that note? How did it touch Charles Edward?—for touch him they felt sure it did. As one man they rushed to the front room of the house, led by Jamie Dalgleish. Through the windows of the dark

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room they could see without being seen. Kilby was in the act of mounting his horse. He talked for a moment with his lieutenant, then uttered a command to his men.

In another minute the tread of the redcoats was dying away down the cobbled street. The voice of the mob was raised in an exultant buzz, and British Will's bell gave one mocking clang, which was immediately hushed by the more conservative members of the crowd.

"The lass!" whispered the Macgregor. "Back to the kitchen! The lass knows!"

They returned hurriedly to the "stewdy." It was Jamie Dalgleish who addressed the young woman.

"Margaret," he said, "you will now tell us what this means."

"I thought you understood," she said. "The redcoat major went to Inverary to obtain a warrant for — for his arrest. He returned this evening. Some one warned me and I warned him. 'T was I who begged him to leave, and remain out of harm till word was sent to him."

"The Duke of Argyll — a warrant!" ex-

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claimed the Macgregor. He suddenly stepped forward and took Margaret's resisting hand. "Ye have done right, lass — ye have done well." He turned excitedly to Cameron and the Macdonald. "Do ye not see this is grand?" he cried. "With the Campbells cutting off our men from the north, and the duke's warrant out for Charlie's arrest, we could do nothing until we brought him out of Argyll into our own lands! It is good — good."

The other chieftains nodded their heads a little surlily, as if they hated to acknowledge intelligence in a rival chieftain. But they saw the point.

"Well," said Cameron, with characteristic dashing at the main issue, "where is the Prince?"

Dalgleish and all eyes turned to Margaret.

"I cannot tell you," she said.

"Do you know?"

"Yes, I know."

The Highlanders growled impatiently. What was this chit of a girl thinking of? This was no time for coaxing a woman to impart secrets that concerned clansmen and kings. James

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Dalglish saw the impatience, and appealed to his daughter.

"Margaret, you must tell these gentlemen where the Prince can be found."

"It is my secret — and his," she answered coolly. "I cannot tell you, because I may not. But he is safe until his presence is required, and I send him the word."

For a moment the men were dazed by the audacity of the thing! A mere wisp of a woman hiding a prince from Cameron of Lochiel, Macdonald of Glencoe, and the Macgregor of Balquhiddy!

"What message did he leave for me?" demanded the Cameron.

"None," said Margaret. "We were speaking of other matters."

Lochiel's face went white with amazement and shock. Finally he turned upon Dalglish an eye that commanded him to exercise his authority as a father.

It was the Macgregor who saved the situation. With his native shrewdness, he believed there must be a reason for this secrecy, and the reason might be the safeguarding of the

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Prince's whereabouts as a secret known to but one, and that a girl, who would never be suspected of knowing it. It suddenly came to his mind that it was a woman who safeguarded Charlie's escape after the '45. He made a remark to that effect. The mention of Flora Macdonald had a stranger effect upon Dalgleish. He shook like a man about to fall in a fit.

"But' one thing is certain," said the Macgregor, turning from the chieftains and addressing himself to Margaret; "there are other dangers of which Charles Edward has not been made aware. He may walk into the Campbells, and be made captive, if he attempts to leave Argyll. This, I have no doubt, is what he would very naturally try to do. He must not."

"He will not leave Argyll," said Margaret, calmly poking the fire.

There was a pause after this conclusive statement. The Macgregor felt uneasy.

"Still, he must be warned. He must know what has transpired to-night, and what is likely to happen to-morrow, and the next

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day. Come, girl! One of us must reach his side to-night."

"None of you can, or will," said Margaret, with an air of finality. "You would be followed, and your presence with him would betray him, and the dear friend who is sheltering him."

"But he must be reached!"

"You can send word."

"How?"

"By me. I can take the message."

"Ah," said the Macgregor, smiling at the others, "then he is not far away. Perhaps that is not as good as it might be. How long would it take you to deliver the message?"

Margaret sat down on the stool and thought for a moment. Then she delivered this startling reply:

"Starting at once and riding a good horse, I could reach him before dawn!"

For a moment the men were too staggered to make any comment. It was the dominie who broke the spell of astonishment.

"Come, girl!" he cried. "Let us have done with this childishness. If he is as far as you



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say, then one of these gentlemen can ride out at once."

Margaret stood up. Her face was pale, but she was strong in determination to keep her secret.

"I cannot, and will not, tell you where the Prince is in hiding," she said. "He is where only I can find him and speak to him. If there is a message, and if a message must reach him before morning, then give it to me, and I will ride with it."

"Margaret!" cried the dominie, his soul wrought with fear and pride.

The chieftains stared at the girl, and noted the strength of her face, the lissomeness of her body, and the pride of her poise. The memory of Scotland's heroic women arose before them like a ghost of other and more romantic days. It was as if history was repeating itself. Charlie had come again, and with him the spirit of Flora Macdonald had returned to earth.

Cameron of Lochiel suddenly sprang forward and took the girl by the shoulders. He stared down into her eyes, and suddenly made a queer noise in his throat. Jamie Dalgleish,

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wrought between the glory of martyrdom and paternal fear for his little lass, was overwhelmed by circumstances to an almost involuntary submission to fate.

“Margaret! Margaret!” he whispered tensely. “Go, lass, and God be with you — and Charlie!”

## CHAPTER XIV

### A WANDERER IN THE NIGHT

**W**HEN Charles Edward left the square, whitewashed house on Inverlachie's hill, it was an easy matter to pass unobserved to the beach. The whole population was gathered before the schoolhouse, and every sense of every man was strained upon the passage of words that was taking place between Captain Kilby and the Macgregor. Charles Edward skirted the crowd without being recognized, and strolled down the cobbled street to the shore road.

Here he turned to the right, and presently stepped on the military road, which he had traversed two nights before. He knew that the road was safe. The redcoats were not at the fort. Still, he observed caution until he had passed the frowning stone buildings of the English stronghold. Then, with his chin on his

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breast, he walked absently along the road to St. Catherine.

The man was overwhelmed by the ignominy of his position. But, for the present, humiliation was overwhelmed by the memory of the recent interview with Margaret Dalgleish, although its result somewhat deepened the sense of ignominy. He had liked Margaret. Liked? He had loved her without knowing it, from the moment he saw her at his bedside in the "stewdy." Coming out of the blackness of unconsciousness, he had been under the delusion that it was his mother's face that looked at him. The impression of that tender delusion had never quite left him when he looked at, or thought of, Margaret. When he had sat in church by her side, waylaying the sly glances which she shot at him when the minister made pointed references, he had been more thrilled by her nearness than by the personal allusions of the preacher. But his position in the world — his situation as a pawn of nations — had precluded all thought of loving this girl. He was an actor in a great international drama. His own identity, his own feelings, had no

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place in affairs. He had no right to love, or allow himself to be loved. Yet —

Just how it had happened he could not rightly resolve in his mind. He had seen something in a woman's eyes, heard something in a woman's voice. Like lightning the veil had been rent in his own soul — the flimsy veil which seemed thick only because it covered darkness — and before he awoke to a sense of shame, to the fitness of things, he had found his soul swaying among the stars with the woman's, and the secret, which he had hardly suspected himself, was out. No matter what the *dénouement* in the "stewdy" had been, or what its immediate cause, he had now to face the fact that he loved Margaret Dalglish, and that Margaret Dalglish loved him.

For a man who has just made what is ordinarily a joy-stirring discovery, the groan that burst from his soul as he walked along the moonlit military road was strange. But his soul was racked by a number of conflicting emotions, the principal of which was that grimmest of all lover's sensations — the sense of utter unworthiness. That the sense was bit-

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terly poignant was the redeeming quality, if he had only known it. No matter what he had done, the man was a gentleman by birth and instinct.

And what had he done? He could not speak of it, even to himself. The time would presently come when he would have to pass through a more galling Gethsemane; for if ever they met again — and they must not — it would be his duty as a man, whose love would protect her even from himself, to tell her the whole truth. Prince or patriot, it mattered little. He must now resume his own nameless, loveless life as an international pawn, and look to his own safety for the sake of the cause for which he fought.

It was some consolation to his quivering feelings to know that there *was* a cause, and that he labored for it at the expense of his own most sacred instincts. He had come to Scotland with a mission. The Fates had played fantastic pranks with him from the beginning. His mission had failed.

At the first move upon the scene of planned action, the powerful Clan Campbell, the

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traitors of Scotland, the allies of England, had swept the board. The cause was lost; the rising quelled. Yet it might not be the end yet. He had taken the one course which might block the game until circumstances altered the situation. The course was an ignominious one; none knew how much so but himself. But as long as he was uncaptured, the rising would not be quelled. It would only hang fire and in abeyance. The chieftains would find a way, and then! —

In the meantime Margaret's command was repeating itself in the recesses of his subconsciousness:

“Go to the quarry knowe. Walk straight to the north over the moors and hills. You will come to a rough, grassy road at last. Turn to the right, and after a while you will find a shepherd's cot. Enter, and say I sent you.”

He lifted his eyes to the heavens. The moon was almost full. It was a fine night for uncertain travel. The stars were clear, and the plough finger pointed suggestively to a bright star, a seeming rod above it. There was his compass by which to cross the hills and moors

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to that grassy road and that mysterious cot. He would meet the shepherd there. His name was Angus McHendrick. Angus would do the rest, even to concealing him until "the word" was brought. Casimir shivered at the ignominy of it all.

He was startled to alertness by an uncertain footstep on the road. The hunched figure of a man was coming toward him from the direction of the quarry. The figure stumbled and swayed and lurched. Charles Edward, believing the person intoxicated, did not leave the road. But he carefully eyed the staggering figure as it approached. As the man came nearer, Casimir saw by the clear moonlight that he was not intoxicated, but injured. His clothes — Good Heaven! it was the redcoat major! — were torn and spattered with mud and blood. His face was bruised and —

All at once Casimir recalled Kilby's face — the glimpse of the man on the horse in the halo of the bonfire. Kilby's face had been similarly distorted, although slightly, in comparison with this. In an instant Charles Edward perceived that there had been a serious falling out be-



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tween the major and the captain, but he could not imagine a cause for it.

Fitzwilliam came to a halt at sight of Charles Edward. He did not recognize him at first, for he cried hoarsely:

"Here — you, what's-your-name! Help me to the fort."

"Hardly," said Casimir, with a smile. "You appear to have been in trouble, Major Fitzwilliam."

At the soft intonation Fitzwilliam burst out in a torrent of profanity.

"You — curse you!" he almost screamed. "Lucky for you I am disabled and alone. I've a warrant for you, my American friend!"

"Ah," said Casimir gently. "So your memory has returned. Possibly that conscience of yours worked hard after our last meeting. Or has the vigorous action of some strong man recalled to your mind where we last met?"

"I never met you in my life!" snarled Fitzwilliam, his tongue running wild before his dazed brains.

"Strictly speaking, you are right," said Charles Edward. "I was attending to my

## A WANDERER IN THE NIGHT

country's business, in which your country would interfere, while you were making yourself agreeable at my aunt's house. Have you forgotten my cousin, Belle Casimir? I have a message for you from her."

The mind which had been whirling over the shame of its own memories, goaded by an honest man's vigorous reminder of the road-ends of transgression, remembered all too well.

"In case your memory is hazy — and your condition would warrant that assumption," said Casimir easily, but with a steely liteness about his enunciation, "I will remind you. A branch of my family lived at Eastport, in the state of Maine, or as it was more familiarly called, Moose Island, part of the disputed Anglo-American territory near the Canadian line. Five years ago, during the blockade — the embargo — when the British ships were lying in these waters, you became acquainted with my cousin, Belle Casimir. She is dead now."

"Dead!" echoed the man dully. The thought of that sweet girl having died, unknown to him, stung his conscience like a lash.

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The whole episode passed before his mind's eyes in a second. It was an old story.

"Yes, she died," said Casimir, with the same steely liteness. "The message? 'Tell Herbert Fitzwilliam that a woman's love survived his scorn of it.' That was five minutes before she died."

For a while there was silence between the two. Casimir was standing with his arms crossed, regarding the swaying, blood-grimed figure with pitiless contempt.

"I recognized you at once when we met by the rocks two nights ago," said he. "I would have killed you there. I had sworn to. But my affairs would not allow me the pleasure of running a blade through you. I would kill you now, with no more thought than I would waste on a cockroach, but that time presses. Besides, I would take shame to complete another man's business. I hope Captain Kilby will finish the work he has apparently begun."

Still Fitzwilliam made no answer. He just stood in the moonlight, with one hand to his brow, swaying back and forth.

"But I give you warning. Now that you

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know me and that my name is Charles Edward Casimir, and that I have work before me in Scotland, I give you fair notice. If you cross my path again, I will kill you without further warning. Good-night, *libertine!* ”

The horrible word came from Casimir's lips with a rasp like that of a suddenly unsheathed sword. Fitzwilliam's other hand leaped upward, as if to guard his head. But Casimir walked past him, and disappeared in the direction of the quarry.

For nearly five minutes the major stood in the middle of the road, his brain aflame with shame and humiliation. It was true! — every word of it, and the truth stirred his fury by degrees. Gradually his wits began to gather together. Like the criminal who tries to make two wrongs spell right, he began to cast about for a way to offset that which is incontrovertible — the truth.

Slowly a light dawned upon Fitzwilliam's brain. There was now no doubt as to this man's identity. He was an American rebel. He knew him. He knew his family. He knew all about him — worse luck! This fact offset

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whatever Casimir might know about *him*. And this was not America. This was British soil, and Casimir was an impostor, a claimant to the crown of Scotland, perhaps a spy!

In any event he was an offender against the peace of "the king, his crown and dignity." Fitzwilliam had a warrant for his arrest, and it would be much to Fitzwilliam's advantage if this man were accorded short shrift. And the sooner the better — for Fitzwilliam!

## CHAPTER XV

### A PRINCE OF ROMANCE

**A**T midnight the moors were bathed in a clear, white light. The skies were cloudless, and the great September moon hung motionless in the zenith. Underfoot the heather was dry, although the peat beneath it was still soft from the recent rains. It was a splendid night for travel, and Charles Edward Casimir found much that was pleasant in his wanderings.

Before him hung the pole star. The finger of the plough seemed to have traveled upward and around it, but the finger still pointed. Casimir followed as confidently as the three wise men pursued their star. Beyond the consciousness that the star was directly before him, he walked on, half oblivious of his actions and of his surroundings. After the suppressed passion of his interview with Fitzwilliam and the

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long train of fierce memories stirred by it, he awoke to a realization of his own position.

Fitzwilliam knew him. Fitzwilliam was in possession of his secret. At least, the major was aware of his identity. How much more he might surmise was a matter worthy of much speculation. Of one thing Charles was confident: his mission was at an end, and it had failed.

Still, he had achieved something. He had created a stir in Scotland which it would take weeks of military activity to repress. And the pot which he had started sizzling would cause the English government anxiety for months. That was all he had hoped to effect.

He had known, of course, from the outset, that his scheme must fail. He had known from the moment the ship struck the Antlers that it had failed already. What followed had been good fortune more than anything else. He had seized his opportunity when he found Inverlachie receptively inclined, and —

It hurt him terribly to think of the deceit he had practiced upon Jamie Dalgleish. He had grown to love the old man for his big-hearted

## A PRINCE OF ROMANCE

simplicity, while he pitied him for his lack of practical insight. Poor old dominie! It made Casimir writhe in his soul to think of it.

"Oh, Liberty!" he groaned aloud to the silent moor, "'what crimes are committed in thy name!'"

And Margaret! The sweat of conscience stood out upon his own brow, as he had seen it glisten upon Fitzwilliam's. Was he any better than Fitzwilliam? Fitzwilliam had deceived a woman and abandoned her. But by the act of abandonment he had confessed his true character. He, Charles Edward Casimir, had deceived a woman in another way — a less forgivable, if less serious, way. He, too, had abandoned the woman, but in the act of abandonment had he confessed his true colors?

No! Worse than that, he had left her with the lie stronger on his lips than ever it had been. He had stolen her love under false pretense. She was there in Inverlachie, praying at this very moment, perhaps, for the safety and welfare of her Prince. Her Prince! Had he been able to see Margaret at that moment, he would have sunk down upon the moor and



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covered his face from the moon in an agony of vain remorse. The little patriot was riding hard to the northeast on a foam-flecked horse — riding to save him!

Yet his crime had not been deliberate — the crime of stealing her love. The other matter was part of his work — his duty for the cause which he served. It had never troubled him, the ethics of it, until now. Indeed, he had looked upon it as rather a humorous, dare-devil kind of adventure. But his growing love and respect for the dominie, his realization of the intensity of the flame with which he had played, his self-discovered love for Margaret, and her affection for him, put matters in a new and less playful light.

Yet he could not wholly blame himself for Margaret's loving him, save that, had he forethought, he might have foreseen. He had never encouraged it. He had allowed her to indulge in hero-worship, as he had allowed others to do the same. It was part of his plan. But he had thought her worship merely that of the Scotswoman for all that was the embodiment of Scotland's history and

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glory and tradition. Perhaps, even yet, her love was no more than this. A woman might well love a prince and cease to love him when he became a man. It was almost a certainty that the blood-daughter of James Dalgleish, the dreamer of romance, would love Bonnie Prince Charlie. Perhaps when she learned the truth her love would turn to contempt and hate.

In his heart he prayed that this sweet cup of a woman's love might pass from him, and that the bitter cup which his actions had brewed for her might be placed in his own hands. He would drink it to the bitter dregs, happy in his pain if she were spared it. For he loved her as a man — an honest man.

The mission had failed — the mission which was still his own secret. It was the fault of circumstances, and none of his making. His own part he had played with galling success. At first it had amused him. Then — it was when he saw himself in the mirror in all the glory of the Stuart — the spirit of the character entered his soul and he played his rôle on the stage with a whole-minded forgetful-

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ness of realities. That night, when he stood in the doorway and heard the mighty blacksmith thunder forth the war cry of the Bruce; when he saw the ready, blazing eyes that turned to him in Jacobite frenzy, he had almost felt for the moment that it was true — true! He was king, by Heaven! He felt it in his veins!

And when the Highlanders — wild Cameron of Lochiel, the shrewd, fearless descendant of Rob Roy Macgregor, and the scion of a thousand chieftains of Clan Ranald — stood before him, the lie had passed his lips for the first time with a smoothness that had astonished even himself; for the thrill of drama had been in his veins, and for the moment he had half-believed that he was, indeed, Bonnie Prince Charlie, the King o' the Highlands!

“Summon the men of the North. I will lead them!” And Prince Pretender, or prince of pretense, he would have led them.

His work was done. The mine was exploded. It would be weeks before England awoke to the fact that it was but a flash in

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the pan, a carefully-planned hoax, calculated to divert her from other international plots. True, Casimir himself was undone, in his own eyes and in the eyes of those who had befriended him. But as long as he remained uncaptured, as long as he effected his escape from Scotland, he knew that the temper of those who had befriended him would keep them loyal to his memory, firm in their confidence, Fitzwilliam to the contrary. And their confidence, their loyalty, was the bitterest draught of the whole cup.

About three o'clock in the morning he struck a glen, in the hollow of which a grassy road, marked with cart-wheels, ran to the north-east beside a noisy, bouldery brook, fringed with fir. This was the road Margaret had spoken of.

He struck off to the right, his soul burning with the bitterness of the fact that even now he was taking advantage of her love and solicitude. He walked on as a man in a dream, his thoughts as confused, as insistent in their confusion, as the waters that quarreled with the boulders of the stream.

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Just as dawn was making a halo in the east, he saw a dim light on the bare hillside to the right, ahead of him. This must be the shepherd's cot.

A sheep-dog — a bushy collie — sprang from the doorstep of a little thatched, white-washed cottage, and rushed ferociously at him. Casimir advanced, unheeding. He was not afraid of dogs, and the collie instantly knew it. It skirted around his legs with a quick sniffing. Charles Edward spoke a word and the animal ran ahead of him to the door, which was instantly opened by a man wrapped in a pepper-and-salt tartan plaid and carrying a rushlight.

"Who comes?" said he in Gaelic. Casimir did not understand the exact words, but he knew it was a challenge.

"I am a friend, seeking shelter, with the good word of Margaret Dalgleish," he replied.

"Hech, ay," said the man, in the dialect, and with a note of wonder. "Come awa' ben. Frae Margaret — hey? Her father will not be ill, or anything like that?"

"No. I will explain presently."

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They had reached the middle of the stone floor of the one and only room which the cottage boasted. It was immaculately clean, Casimir saw at a glance. The floor slabs were scoured with clay, and decorated by spiral chalk marks. There was a great open chimney, and in the corner was a rude bed. On the wall hung a shepherd's crook, a horn, a powder canister, and an old flintlock; and a ram's head, mounted on ash, was glaring at a stuffed eagle.

The shepherd was holding up the rushlight, intent upon seeing his strange visitor's face. Charles cast aside the cloak which he had worn against the night air, and stood revealed in the costume of the Stuart chieftain.

The shepherd set down the rushlight with an exclamation in Gaelic. Then he said in English:

"God forgive me! Or is my sight gone gyte?"

"Sir," added the shepherd fiercely, "there are no two men with your face in the world. You are —"

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"I deny it!" said Casimir before the name was uttered.

The shepherd stared at him; then his eyes lit with understanding.

"What brings ye to my cot?" he asked respectfully.

Casimir's hand slowly went to his breast. For a moment it paused uncertainly. Then he drew from an unseen pocket a piece of paper. The shepherd—no dolt, to judge by the small collection of books on a homemade shelf—opened the missive and read:

ANGUS McHENDRICK,—The bearer is a good friend. You will know that. Keep him safe for Scotland and your friend,

MARGARET.

"You are safe here," said McHendrick, tearing the paper into minute fragments.

"Are ye pursued?"

"Not to-night, but I will be to-morrow."

"What is your will?"

Casimir paused a long time with his head down and his fingers drumming on the table.

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Then he looked up and said, from the depth of sorrow, remorse, and bitterness:

"Tell me how to reach Glasgow."

"Would ye take ship?" asked the shepherd, astonished and, it seemed, slightly disappointed.

"It were better — at this time — and at once."

He felt like a coward fighting for his own skin. But he knew that to prolong his sojourn in Scotland meant death to him and sorrow and ignominy to those who had befriended him.

"It is a long way to Glasgow," mused the shepherd, "and the road will be infested with enemies, if they are already on the lookout for you. Ye would be safer to bide with me and my friends. The mountains are high and many, and the glens are a sealed book to the Sassenach redcoat."

"If need be, I shall trust to your friends," said Casimir. "But, if it is possible, I would make Glasgow."

"Glasgow is England," said the shepherd, with a sneer for the Lowlanders.



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"My object is to leave Scotland."

McHendrick looked long and steadily at the royal figure, and shook his head sadly.

"Again!" he muttered. "Again! And so soon." He walked up and down with the collie at his heels, its bushy tail almost sweeping the stone slabs. Presently he turned to Casimir and said:

"If you will go, then you will. It is easy. Yon road leads to the clachan of Morag on the Firth of Clyde—less than a day's march through the glen and by Loch Eck. I have friends there who have no reason to love the English king and his vassals. A ship sails for Bordeaux, in France, in three days." He looked Charles Edward straight in the face. "She is a smuggler."

Casimir's face lighted up. So much the better for one who was striving to evade the officers of King George.

"Good!" said he.

For a moment he was wondering what traffic this Highland shepherd could have with smugglers, and he thought of the wheel marks on the almost invisible grass road.

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"When shall I start?"

"To-night after dark. Morning will bring us to the Cothouse Inn, where we will meet friends —"

The collie suddenly stopped and pricked its ears. Next moment it darted to the door and pawed it open, after sitting up on its hind legs and jerking the latchstring with its teeth. It was done so quickly, and with such human intelligence, that Casimir did nothing but stare. But McHendrick became excited.

"Some one is coming!" he whispered. "See! There is another door — back there. If —"

He paused and listened. Relief dawned on his face. Casimir could hear the collie yelping and whining, amid the thudding of horse hoofs.

"It is good," said McHendrick, smiling. "The dog says it is a friend."

The shepherd advanced toward the front door. Before he reached it there came a peculiar tap, which might have been the private signal of a particular friend. McHen-

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drick uttered a guttural cry of pleasure and hastily advanced to greet the comer.

The door swung open and Margaret Dalgleish stepped into the room!

Her face was white, and blue shadows beneath her eyes told of great fatigue. The dog yelped and whined around her plaid skirt, and the old shepherd uttered exclamations, minglings of amazement at her inexplicable presence in the far glen at that hour of the morning, and joy at her being there at any time. But Margaret heeded neither the shepherd nor his canine child. Her gaze was fixed upon Charles Edward, who stood by the table before the open hearth, staring at her with eyes in which was indescribable pain.

“Margaret!” he said, in a strange whisper.

At the word — the name uttered by him — all the fatigue left her face. With a glad cry she rushed forward and fell upon her knees at his feet.

“My Prince!” she sobbed, her lips seeking his hand.

He stepped back with his right arm over his face, as if to shut out the picture of her

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worshipping love. A groan broke from the depths of his soul.

"Don't! Don't!" he almost pleaded.

In an instant she was on her feet, her face alight with tender solicitude. What was it? Was he ill? Was he hurt? Was he tired? Ah, yes. She had forgotten. He must be tired. But he should rest now. He was safe here. All the king's horses and all the king's men would n't be able to find him now. She had a message for him, but it would keep until after —

"Come, Angus!" she cried. "We must build the fire and boil the porridge and make the tea." She suddenly burst out laughing — the laughter of a woman who has undergone a strain and knows it is over. She unpinned her bonnet and threw it on the table, flung off the plaid, laughed again and tripped about, while she sang:

"For Charlie is my darling!  
My darling! — my darling!"

As suddenly she stopped. Her face fell. She had forgotten. He was her love, but

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he was the Prince. Such behavior was unseemly in the presence of one so high. He was staring at her with strained eyes and furrowed brows. She stood downcast before him. All at once he sank upon a rude stool by the table, and buried his face in his hands.

"My Prince!" she cried, coming toward him with her hands spreading over his head. "Charlie — Bonnie Prince Charlie!"

He suddenly sprang to his feet and struck his fist on the table. His face was distorted with misery and pain.

"Enough!" he cried hoarsely. "Prince! Prince! I am no Prince! I am a liar, a cheat, a miserable thief, a —"

He stopped as a look of unutterable agony crossed her face. She hardly realized what he was saying. Her only thought was that the man she loved was ill, that he was in great mental distress, that he was not himself, and every instinct in her woman's heart responded to the call of his need.

Casimir was staring at her with eyes that hungered after her love and esteem, yet were sullen with the miserable realization that he

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must be his own executioner. Oh, if they could make this moment eternal. If for all time they could stand thus, he with the words unspoken, she with her faith unshattered. In another minute her faith would be murdered, her love strangled, and her eyes would look out of a soul at bay, with anger and contempt.

"Margaret," he said, "I must speak now. I would have spoken before, but to explain one little thing meant to reveal everything. And I was working for a cause—the cause of my country—"

The necessary words failed him. Her face flushed with joy and pride.

"Ay," she whispered, "for Scotland—bonnie Scotland."

He looked around him in dumb agony—everywhere but at her face—her eyes. He saw the collie lying by the fireplace, its great animal eyes fixed upon him. To the man it seemed that the dog, by a sixth animal sense, already divined the truth, and was accusing him with its moist, wide, reproachful gaze.

Casimir's eyes turned to the shepherd. The

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grizzled old man of the bare hills was peering at him from beneath outstanding brows. Charles Edward could have stood his presence, but the dog — no!

He waved the shepherd from the room with a last pretense of princely command. McHendrick obediently went out. The collie followed, its bushy tail trailing low between its legs. From the doorway the dog cast back at Casimir a look of touching reproach.

Then Charles Edward Casimir and Margaret Dalgleish faced each other. The light had gone out of her face. She knew that something was amiss, and her gaze was expectant of something, although never of what he presently told her.

“Margaret,” said he, as steadily as he could, “I may not be a dishonest prince, even, but God knows I would be an honest man. I have deceived you, Margaret. I am not the Prince. I am not a Stuart. I am not even a Scotsman!”

## CHAPTER XVI

### CASIMIR'S CONFESSION

**O**NE of the momentary eternities of life is when one divulges something of importance to the person most concerned in the revelation, and awaits the result.

Casimir's eyes were fixed hungrily, earnestly, anxiously, and agonizedly upon Margaret's face. At first she seemed hardly to understand what he had said, or what its meaning; whether, indeed, she had heard rightly, or heard at all. Then came a look of amazement, followed by a pallor of sudden hurt. Slowly it dawned upon her that the man was telling her a truth. Before her eyes Charles Edward Casimir underwent a transformation. Romance, royalty, everything upon which she had built her love, fell away from him like a veil from some prosaic imposture, and there stood before her a man



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— an ordinary man, who had violated every convention.

Her eyes expressed, first pain, then horror, then slow-rising anger. He was not a prince. He was not a Stuart. He was not even a Scot! He was a thing of romantic pretense from first to last, and she — her father — the chieftains — Scotland! —

“O-o-o-oh!” burst from her lips, a moan of overwrought emotion.

“May I explain?” he asked, lowering his head, now that the worst was revealed, and the worst received from her eyes.

His words awoke her to the material need of words. She suddenly straightened up and faced him.

“Explain?” she echoed, with dangerous calm. “What further can you explain? You have forfeited the right to a hearing. You have explained all that is needed. O-o-oh!”

Again the little moan. She turned away from him, and walked the length of the room. At the door she paused, with her back to him, her eyes fixed blankly on the woodwork. She

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was suffering still from shock. Her scattered wits were trying to rally; her outraged senses were endeavoring to thrust aside a shattered faith; her whole being was gathering its forces for the vengeance which her soul demanded.

Presently she spun around upon him. The little lass of the kitchen had disappeared. In her stead stood a grown woman, a woman worse than scorned — a woman fooled — a woman stabbed. Her face was white — very white; her eyes were wide, glassy, and fixed, and her little hands were clenched tightly in the folds of her dress.

“So!” she said, forcing a terrible smile; “you were a cheat — a liar — a self-made hero! You let me think you were my king. You let me pour at your feet all that I would give to my sovereign — all my racial pride, all my loyalty, every instinct of my fathers. You let me kneel, and kiss your hands, and adorn your bonnet with the insignia of the king. You have committed the most utterly contemptible act that ever blotted history — so contemptible that the human mind could

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not conceive of such a perpetration, and so none dreamed it possible."

Casimir did not answer; not by even the lifting of his head did he attempt to defend himself. His heart was dead; his soul was dying in agony; his nerve was paralyzed. He was a wreck—because the instinct of his best manhood knew that she was right, according to her light; and he knew that he deserved to suffer at her hands.

"You let me love you, when you could have stayed me—as any man can any woman. You let me confess my love, and you pretended that you loved me, when you could have stayed me, as any man can who is not morally a coward or physically a brute. You kissed my lips and—"

"No, no!" he burst out, like a man in the throes of unbearable torture. "I loved you. I love you now—"

"Silence, you dog!" she cried fiercely. "Don't lie any more."

It was more than he could bear. She did not seem to realize that she was striking a prostrate man, or, realizing it, saw no reason

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for mercy. He sank upon the stool, and leaned his head on his right hand heavily.

"In one minute you rent the castles you helped me build, and crushed my love in the ruins," she went on ruthlessly. "I am dead! Do you understand — dead. It is just a soul that is crying to you. Do you understand that? *I am dead!*"

Her voice broke, and her body shook. There were beads of sweat upon his brow. He understood. For a second his brain flashed to Fitzwilliam, and to the still, white face of Belle Casimir. Belle was at rest. Margaret was buried alive. And Fitzwilliam? Was not he, himself, the worse offender?

"And my father?" she went on, her voice coming from a ghostly, echoing distance. "O-o-oh, my father — my father!" The voice arose to a pitch of fury. "You accepted his kindness, and lied to him. You saw that poor old man's child-like faith, and you took it and spent it like a thief. You accepted his hospitality, and violated every tradition of hospitality. We were a plain people, though better born than you — im-

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postor! — and we gave you our best. You made a fool of my old, trusting father. I could forgive you — no, but I could forget my own hurt; but for what you did to him I could — and may yet — *kill you!* ”

He started. He looked up at her with a madman's eyes. Suddenly he reached to his breast, and his hand closed over something.

“Kill yourself?” she jeered. “It would be like you — coward!”

Again his head fell heavily on his hand. There was silence for a few moments. When she spoke again, her voice was low and tense with scorn.

“But what am I? What is my father? We are nothing. We would be willing sacrifices if — if you had been what you pretended to be. I rode hard all night, not to save the man I loved, but for the sake of the King of Scotland. My father has staked his life, his liberty, for the King of Scotland. Scotland has laid down its peace for its king. Its chieftains have defied the King of England for the King of Scotland.

“And what now? They will be driven

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from their homes into exile. They will starve among foreigners, as they did before. The tartan will be forbidden again, and the voice of the pibroch will be a crime against the peace of the English king. All Scotland will weep for years, and walk in the shadow of disgrace. Why? Because an impostor came, traded upon what is most sacred in the heart of the land and the heart of its people, and fled when his own neck was to be saved! Oh, you — despicable — worm!”

Again there was silence. She could not see his face, but his whole attitude was one of such unutterable misery that, while her heart did not soften, she felt that she had administered as much humiliation as a human being could suffer and survive. Besides, although in the white heat of her fury, she still did not wish him to die. She wished him to live and suffer the retribution of his own conscience.

Margaret advanced, took the plaid from the table, and wrapped it around her shoulders. Then she drew up a stool by the fire-side and seated herself.

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There was not a sound in the room, save that of the man's deep breathing, and, to Margaret, the thunder of her own overwrought heart. There came a scratching at the door, which was presently pushed open. The collie came in, softly, and paused in the middle of the room, as if puzzled at the silence where two human beings inhabited. The dog sniffed Margaret's plaid, and seeming to find no sympathy there, turned to the man. One of Casimir's hands hung listlessly at his side. The dog seemed to divine the need of comfort here. The collie whined and licked the man's hand.

Margaret, turning to glance at Casimir, saw the picture. All at once she realized the man's friendless condition. The dog had curled itself under Casimir's stool, and was gazing at her from umbrage with great, reproachful eyes.

Something lumped in her throat. The white heat cooled, and her heart beat slower, and with a thicker motion. Her teeth came together to force back a sob. She succeeded in keeping silence, but she drew the plaid up

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over her head to hide the sudden, hot tears that welled into her eyes.

When Casimir slowly raised his head, he found her thus—a huddled figure by the fire, with a bowed head hidden under a plaid.

“Margaret,” said he in a choked voice, “I have heard, and I have submitted. I deserve all you have said. No man could deserve less—or more. But—may I tell my story?”

She moved slightly, but did not answer.

“It is not in defense of myself, or of my actions. From your standpoint—and perhaps from mine, too—I and they are indefensible. But I know how I have hurt you, whom I never meant to hurt—whom I would not hurt if my life were at stake. It may help you—it may salve your own hurt in the days that are to come if I tell you my story.”

She shuddered. The days that were to come!

“I am not a Scotsman. I am an American.”

He paused. He wondered if she were listening. She was still hidden under the plaid, and she had not moved from her huddled attitude.



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But he knew that not a word would escape her ears. He went on :

"I was born in Virginia. My grandfather was a Pole."

She suddenly flung the plaid aside, and blazed out at him :

"What has this to do with me ? I am not interested in your ancestry."

Their eyes met for a moment. He was again master of himself. In his look were determination to proceed with his story and patience with her unwillingness to hear it. She tossed her head, and again buried her face in the plaid, turning her head to the fire. But in her action he saw a momentary victory, and she realized a momentary defeat.

"My grandfather was a Pole," he repeated, quietly. "In his veins was the blood of John Sobieski, King of Poland. Your King Jamie married a daughter of John Sobieski. Their child was Charles Edward Philip Casimir Stuart. He was half a Pole. If the royal blood of Scotland does not flow in my veins, at least my blood flowed in Prince Charlie's."

She was tapping a foot impatiently.

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"That, of course, does not help me," said he bitterly ; " but I speak of it that you may understand some other things — my likeness to your Prince, for instance. The distant relationship may have had something to do with a mother's whim in adding Edward to my name at christening. My father's name was Charles Casimir."

In the pauses of his speech the silence was broken only by the impatient tapping of her foot.

" As a baby they called me ' Bonnie Prince Charlie.' As I grew up the name became mine almost. In time it became common talk that the name was half mine by right, for I was a descendant of one king and a relation of that king's grandson — your Prince. I had no right to it, of course, but the world would not have it so. The women, who seem to be partial to princes and princes' blood, would hear of no denial. And I am a man, with a man's vanity.

" My mother dressed me on certain occasions in the costume of Scotland, and kissed me and called me her ' Bonnie Prince Charlie.' The negroes on my father's plantation called

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me 'Prince Charlie.' Do you blame a lad for liking it? Do you blame a lad that the name became almost his name?"

The tapping had ceased, but she still sat mysterious and unapproachable.

"When I became a man — they say I was not cursed with ill looks — the women still called me 'Bonnie Prince Charlie.' I tell you this in all humiliation. Once there was to be a ball in our capital, Washington — a masquerade ball. I allowed my beard to grow to suit the part which I played. I wore the royal tartan of Scotland, and was presented to John Adams — our President then — with all mock ceremony.

"Through that incident I became a favorite of the President. Presently I was sent to Paris on a diplomatic mission. The story traveled before me. When I came to Paris I found that it had gathered moss on the way. No longer was it a jest, a whispered rumor. It was an accepted fact that I was of the royal blood of Scotland and of Poland, and the romance-loving Frenchmen would take no denial.

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"I grew weary of denying it. Denial was confirming modesty, it seemed. And a man in the first flush of youth loves favors of the fair. I confess, with all humiliation, that I enjoyed the pleasurable advantages of being taken for a scion of royalty.

"Then came the plot."

He paused. She did not seem to be listening, but he knew she was. His hesitation was due to the fact that he was about to place a secret in the keeping of a woman who had no reason to respect it. But — it might help her.

"My country was still at odds with England. England impressed our seamen unjustly. England strove to thicken our difficulties — when our republic was striving to find itself — by inciting the savages to devastation of our frontiers. England impeded our progress by blockading our merchant ships. We had no reason to be thoughtful or considerate of England.

"At last England's attitude became intolerable. Our people urged war. Our President — President Madison — was against it.

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What could we do against England? It was one thing to drive England from our land. It was another thing to attack England upon the high seas. While America could act upon the defensive, she was not prepared to take the offensive. But two Southern hot-heads — Calhoun and Clay — forced war. War is now in progress between my country and yours, or shall I say between my country and the enemy of your country?

“I was in Paris when the first rumor of hostilities to come reached diplomatic circles. Upon one occasion history had repeated itself, in my presentation at the court of Napoleon as Charles Edward. Napoleon is a remarkable man. Nothing escapes him. While he did not seem to notice me on that occasion, he had — very much. I was surprised when, several months ago, I received a summons to his presence.

“When we met he addressed me — persistently addressed me — as ‘Your Highness.’ He spoke to me with remarkable freedom. He declared his intention of advancing upon Russia. When he crushed Russia he intended

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to move upon England. His purpose was to take each separately, but England and Russia had entered into an alliance. He feared them jointly.

"The American war provided anxiety for England. She could hardly assist Russia. He regretted that Prince Charles Edward was dead. For now would have been his opportunity. But he had 'known all the time' that there was 'an heir.' Then he put the matter bluntly. He would assist America in every possible manner in her war against England, for by America's strength and tenacity of fight he (Napoleon) would be safe to attack Russia without English interference. To make England's neutrality surer he showed me how a disturbance in Scotland would not only safeguard him, but increase England's troubles, to the more possible success of America in her punitive war.

"The rest of the scheme and the manner of its execution would hardly interest you. But it may help you in the days to come to know that it was for my country's sake that I sacrificed my honor and my love, even

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as you would have sacrificed yours for Scotland."

There was a long silence. Finally she arose and walked toward the door. He thought that she was going without a word; but she turned and looked at him. Her eyes were softer, her demeanor calmer; but the pain of her wound showed in an extreme pallor.

"And how does all this help me?" she asked.

He smiled a little.

"Help you?" he echoed. "It should help you if your love was patriotism. I thought it was the 'Prince' you loved."

She winced. Then her eyes blazed angrily.

"There was — there is — nothing else that I could have loved."

It was his turn to wince. He bowed gravely to hide the pain of the shaft. She stood irresolute in the doorway. Something strange was moving in her. At last she laid her hand on the latch and drew the door open. The morning sunshine flooded her hair and face.

"Good-bye!" she said.

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"Good-bye!" said he, never moving from the table. He dared not.

She turned to go. A shadow fell athwart the doorway, and the shepherd appeared.

"Margaret," he said, "ye will not be going?"

"I am," she said firmly.

McHendrick looked gravely at her, then flashed an anxious eye upon the man within.

"To go back is to betray him," he said in a whisper. "The moors are alive with redcoats."

"I am going," she said.

But she stood still in the doorway, staring blankly at the sunlit hillside.



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## CHAPTER XVII

### THE ATONEMENT OF JANET GLEN

**B**ACK in Inverlachie that Tuesday morning human affairs were moving apace. Yet human affairs seemed to have lapsed to normal conditions. Since the dispersal of the crowd on the previous night, matters had hung fire in the village. People went to bed late, and wondered, on wakeful pillows, what the morrow would bring forth. The morrow gave birth to a clear, cool, sunny September morning, and the previous night's affairs took on the atmosphere of a passing bad dream.

For as soon as men went abroad they found that the situation had changed. The chieftains and the Highlanders had vanished. So also had the redcoats of Fort James. No doubt the disappearance of the first had to do with the disappearance of the second. Save for a few sentries and orderlies, the fort was evacuated.

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The village worthies turned to "Gangy" Beckett's for information. None was forthcoming. In the night, all parties, including the Prince, had taken wings and flown, apparently. Sandy McClung risked a call upon the dominie, and from Sandy came a little information — information that only deepened the mystery.

Jamie Dalgleish had answered the door. But it was not the same Jamie. The dominie, as Sandy McClung described him, was older — much older — this morning. He had turned white in the night, and his shoulders were stooped. He had answered Sandy's questions with no great good nature. In fact, he had "gey near bitten ma heid aff!"

"I ken nothing!" said the dominie. "What should I ken? They've gone. They've left my house. That is all — and please let me be!"

"Somethin's gone gyte!" quoth "Gangy" Beckett solemnly. "It canna be the weather," he added reflectively, gazing through the window at the clear autumn sunshine.

For an hour or more, British Will, Hughie

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Gibson, Davie Blue, and Sandy tried to revive some excitement and interest. But something had gone wrong. The bottom had completely dropped out of the affair. Last night's furore had been but a flash in the pan. At least, whatever it was, it had changed its scene of action. Inverlachie was just Inverlachie this morning, and when Davie Blue realized it he went back and accepted the job to straighten out the weather-cock on the schoolhouse. The cheery, musical clang of his hammer on the anvil settled the nerves of the villagers. Before noon matters were nearly as they had been in Inverlachie.

But human affairs were still moving apace. In the doctor's cottage Wallace sat in the living-room, wrapped in thought. Dumbly wondering at what had come over Peggy, the physician was still occupied by thoughts touching himself even more closely. He was thinking of the previous night—not of the riot and the part he played in it, but of the after-affair with Janet Glen.

When Janet spoke to him on the outskirts of the crowd, Tom Wallace knew Janet's

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secret. Thrilled to his heart, Wallace suddenly realized what his action had meant to Janet. Janet was very much of a woman, and — and she seemed to be both proud and concerned over his steel-nerved interfering.

It pleased Wallace, somehow. It pleased him more and more as he walked with her toward her little home. He knew that he was pleased, and began to dissect the feeling. He discovered, before he had escorted her halfway home, that he thought a lot of Janet Glen, and much of what she might think of him. He also realized, before three quarters of the way had been traversed, that being a widower with a daughter just entering the first whirlpool of womanhood was a situation in which assistance — womanly assistance — would not be amiss.

“It takes a mother — a maternal adroitness,” quoth Tom Wallace unto himself, “to handle a situation of this sort.”

“It’s early yet,” said Wallace, at the gate of Janet’s garden. “If you are n’t afraid of an old widower like me, I’ll step in and help you poke up the fire.”

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"You're always welcome, Doctor," said Janet, opening the door, and leaving him the task of closing it behind him.

Wallace laid his bonnet aside, and poked up the fire, while Janet took off her shawl in another room. When she came back Wallace wondered what had come over her. Her eyes were bright and soft, and there was a touch of color in her cheeks. There was something else, but Wallace could not place the charming little difference a new touch of her hair had made. In that instant Dr. Thomas Wallace made up his mind.

"Janet," said he, "sit down — there — right opposite me, so I can see the light in your face."

She obeyed, with just a little smile and a certain tremor of her underlip.

"Janet," said the doctor, "I'm a practical man, but I've got a well-meaning heart."

"Everybody knows that, Tom Wallace."

"But not as well as I'd like you to know it, Janet," said he.

There was no embarrassment in his manner. His face was calm, if a little suffused

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with pleasure, and his eyes moved from the fire to her face and back again as he spoke. It was as if he was talking to the fire and turned to Janet at intervals to see what *she* thought of it.

"You're a fine woman, Janet," said he, "and there are an amazing lot of fools in this village. Speaking as a man and as a doctor, you are the finest woman all round I ever knew—or heard of. I'm a plain, matter-of-fact sort of fellow, but I have a good opinion of myself, too. That's self-respect, I fancy, and while I don't lie awake thinking what a pity it is a lot of people don't know me, I'm as good as the average man—with a hankering to be better.

"Janet," he concluded, "Peggy needs you. Speaking for myself, it has suddenly come to me that I don't want to travel any farther without you. Could you marry me?"

His eyes came from the fire to her face as he put the question. He saw a light flash across Janet's face. It told him better than words that there was no man she would more like to marry than himself, Tom Wal-

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lace. This, at least, is how he interpreted the light that filled her eyes suddenly and the way she slowly blushed. He somehow hated to make the bald statement to himself: "She loves me!" That was for her to say if she wanted to.

He waited. The light died out of her eyes, Presently, while the pleasure did not altogether leave her face, there came a look of regret, and her gaze took on that peculiar sheen of introspection — the look that ignorant men misinterpreted.

"Tom," she said, very softly and very steadily, "you know that I think more of you than — than of any man in Inverlachie — any man alive, if you like. And it has made me very happy — what you have just said. But — but — I thought you knew, Tom."

His eyes slowly turned from her face, and he looked into the fire. He did not know that the moment his gaze was averted hers leaped upward, and a pair of yearning, maternal eyes lingered on his gray-templed head.

She loved him — loved him with all the strength of her great womanhood. And now

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she knew that he loved her. Oh, if only it could be! If only she could marry him, for his sake, for her own sake, for Peggy's sake! It would be a solution of — the difficulty.

Peggy's secret was safe with her and one other. The one other was a man who, Janet knew, would come back when his brain cleared. Janet had taken stock of the man — Kilby. Kilby would take care of Fitzwilliam. Apparently he had done so already. He would not have acted as his bruised face suggested he had, if he did not love Peggy — still. He would come back, and if Janet were only Peggy's mother by law, everything would be well, and the dead past would bury its dead. And honest Tom Wallace would be spared. He would never know.

One thing Janet was thankful for. There was no future calamity to be reckoned with. If only Kilby would find the necessary bigness in his heart to forgive the woman and be content that he had punished the man, all would be well. Janet did not blame little Peggy. She blamed a law, man-made for man, framed to condone man's frailty and



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punish, apparently, woman's. She found no cause for bitterness.

"Still dreaming, Janet?" said the doctor's voice. She awoke to find him regarding her again. "Come; be yourself," he said kindly, unoffendingly. "Come out of your shell, Janet, or I'll be thinking that what men say of you is true, and that you are consulting the oracles."

Becoming earnest and grave, he continued:

"I admit there are times when I don't understand you myself. I haven't tried to, Janet, and I never listened to what others thought was the answer to the riddle of you. But for both our sakes I want you, this once, to open your heart—open your mind—to me, even if you find you can't open your arms. I know —"

"Tom," said Janet abruptly, "I can't marry you. I thought you knew that. I would if I could, but I can't."

"I see," said Wallace, after consulting the fire. "It's true about that husband. And he is still alive?"

"It is true about that husband," said she,

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simply. "Whether he is dead or alive, I don't know."

Wallace gave all his attention to the fire. He waited for Janet to speak further. There was nothing that he could ask with propriety.

In a little while Janet began to tell a story. It was a story that staggered Wallace, used as he was to family skeletons and revelations of nobility or weakness in human nature. As she proceeded, he left the fire and gave his undivided attention to Janet. And every word made him love, respect, and honor her more. Here was a great woman, indeed!

"They will have told you, perhaps," she said, "that I was called 'The Belle of Inverlachie.' I married an artist named Richard Glen. It was considered a 'good catch,' as the village women put it.

"I am not going to tell you the details, Tom. I was flattered; I was a foolish woman, then. For a time we were happy. Then poverty came, and love flew out of the window. It never was real love. He was good-looking, a gentleman, so-called, and romantic. I was young and pretty, and dissatisfied with

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the prospect of marrying one of my own kind. I could n't keep house. I had never cooked a thing in my life, and I had never scrubbed a floor or washed a saucer. My aunt — she died before you came to Inverlachie — was rather well-to-do. That was what spoiled me. She had notions about real gentility.

“To make a long story short, between my uselessness as a wife and Dick's lack of the practical or the consistent, or of moral strength as a husband, our home was — a tragedy.

“He drank a lot, and his drinking became a habit. The slightest quarrel was the signal for a debauch on his part, and that led to genuine differences. It was the endless chain of cause and effect. And always his threat was that if things did not improve before very long, he would ‘join the soldiers.’”

Wallace smiled in spite of himself. He wondered on the instant why — in Scotland at least — miserable married men always threatened to “join the soldiers.”

“Maybe he did join the soldiers,” continued Janet quietly. “Anyhow, after he had sold

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everything he could lay hands on, and drunk himself to the point where he could hardly lift a cup to his mouth of a morning, he disappeared. Whether he is dead or alive, I don't know, Doctor. I have never heard from him."

She paused. Her hands were folded in her lap, and she was gazing with him into the fire.

"That was fifteen years ago. I'm nearly forty now, Tom. I suppose he is dead, but —"

"You would be justified in thinking so," said Wallace, absently.

"But I would never act upon the conviction," said Janet.

"Why?" asked the doctor abruptly.

"It is a difficult thing to — to put clearly," she said. She was becoming strangely agitated, all at once, as if she was not sure that she would be understood.

"Go on, Janet," said Wallace.

"I was not a good wife — I know I was not a good wife to him," she said. "I — I was not fitted to be any man's wife, least of

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all the wife of a man who was very impractical himself. After he went away I thought a lot, and knew my shortcomings. I might have made a man of him, if I had been — if I had known womanhood as I know it now. Of course, my idea of womanhood is only a theory, got out of my own thinking. If he came back now I might — I might — ”

Dr. Wallace lifted his head and looked at her with slow-growing wonder and admiration in his honest eyes.

“ It is difficult to explain,” she said. “ But I feel that I was to blame. I did not make a home for him, and that bore upon his weak strain. I have told you what happened. I — I came to know myself, and I determined that I would redeem myself in my own eyes, in God’s eyes, and in the eyes of Dick Glen, if ever he came back. From that day to this I have scrubbed my own floors, washed my own dishes, kept my house — as you see it — and I have waited for him with a lowly and contrite heart. His room is there — that door behind you — just as he left it, only it is tidy, and I air the sheets every day or

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two. And I have tried to think more of others."

"Janet," said Wallace, his voice rather husky, and with a bit of moisture in his eyes, "do you still love Dick Glen?"

She smiled — a mere ghost of a smile — and gazed at the honest, stupid Wallace curiously.

"No," she said quietly, and added: "No, Tom."

"Do you, in your heart, think he is dead?"

After a long silence, during which her eyes wandered into space, she answered:

"I feel now, as I have always felt, that he is not. He will come back."

Again there was stillness. Both of them were looking into the fire, and there were tears in the eyes of both. Presently Wallace cleared his throat, and got up. He picked up his bonnet, and held out his right hand.

"Good-night, Janet," he said.

"Good-night, Tom," she said, unashamed of the tears, and looking straight into his eyes.

"Janet Glen," said the doctor, with a catch

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in his utterance, "I love, honor, and respect you more than I did half an hour ago. I mean to go on hoping that the God who, for some inscrutable reason, tests people by tangling them, will mark the result of this test and untangle us. Good-night, you wonderful woman!"

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE VANISHING SMUGGLER

MARGARET was awakened by a cold, moist touch on her left hand. For a full minute she could not realize where she was. Her sleep on the rude couch in the shepherd's hut, after her decision to remain, had been long and dreamless. The place was dark, save for the shadow-shaping flickers of the dying fire in the hearth. A monstrous bird with glassy eyes was glaring at her from a dim corner. It was an eagle, and —

Then she remembered, and sat up. The collie was sitting beside the couch, and its eyes were fixed upon her attentively. It was the cold snout of the animal which had touched her to wakefulness.

Outside, there were a subdued murmuring of many voices and the occasional clack of loose wheel-spokes. She understood. The



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smugglers had come. In a little while they would go, and — he would go with them.

Presently the door opened. McHendrick entered softly. Seeing her awake, he smiled and nodded his head.

“Will ye get ready?” he said.

“Must I go?” she asked. “Cannot I remain here until —”

“No,” he said, pursing his lips. “It is the best way. Ye cannot return the way ye came. Ye would be caught and questioned. And a girl walking alone on the moors would arouse suspicion, especially Margaret Dalgleish, in whose house —”

“I know — I know. But could I not remain here for a few days?”

“I would not like that, either,” said McHendrick. “’Tis a dreigh place at best, but ye would have visitors afore long, and your presence would not be missed in Inverlachie until your presence was marked elsewhere. No, Margaret, ye must come with us.”

“Ah. Then you go, too?”

“I will that,” said he emphatically. “Did ye think, little lass, I would trust you alone

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with these wild fellows? No; I go, too, and I will see that you are returned to your father when the time is safe."

Margaret arose, and began to fold the plaid around her.

"You will remain!" said McHendrick suddenly, in Gaelic.

Margaret turned abruptly, wondering why he had changed his plans. But the shepherd was speaking to the collie, which obediently went to the fire and curled up beside it.

"Is he—where is he?" asked Margaret presently, when she was ready.

"Ye will see for yourself," said McHendrick. "If ye do not recognize him, then, indeed, he is safe from other eyes. Put the plaid about your head. There! That is better. You will look like one of their women."

He led her out into the night. It was not dark. The transition had been a slow change from dusklight to moonlight. The big orb was sailing upward over a crutch of the hills, away at the head of the glen. Before the shepherd's cot was a cart drawn by scraggy-looking horses. The cart was laden with a

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pile of concealed barrels. There were five or six men moving around the cart — ill-looking fellows, some in kilts, a few in trews. The latter suggested seafaring men, especially their pigtails and shoon, and a certain common fashion of head-gear. Each wore a handkerchief bound around his head, instead of a bonnet.

No sooner had Margaret joined the party than a whisper was passed among the men. The horses were spoken to. The animals responded like trained brutes. There was no cracking of whips or shouting. The mysterious cart, with its little escort, moved away up the glen, the only sound being an occasional word and the *clack-cl-cluck-clack* of a loose wheel-spoke.

At the tail end of the procession walked Margaret and the shepherd, she very unlike herself in such company, and with her head wrapped in the plaid; McHendrick very much like himself in his pepper-and-salt plaid, and with his long, crook'd staff.

Walking alone, just ahead of Margaret and the shepherd, was a tall, graceful man. Mar-

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garet glanced curiously at him. She knew the carriage and height, but in other things the man was not Charles. He was attired in clothes that were foreign. He wore a queer, brimmed hat, under which appeared a kerchief, and there were rings in his ears. Once, when he turned his head, Margaret caught his profile against the moon. It was like Casimir's, yet very unlike.

"Who is that man — there?" said Margaret to McHendrick.

"Whisht!" said the shepherd. "He is a Frenchman from Bordeaux. He does not speak the Sassenach or the Gaelic. That is Jules Guerin. He is one of the ship's men."

Margaret watched the man curiously, and wondered why the shepherd spoke with a kind of chuckle in his throat. But what did it matter? The man was nothing to her, unless he were Casimir, in which event he would be something less than nothing.

And so they tramped on slowly. The horses made good progress sometimes, and the pedestrians were left behind; but presently they

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would come upon the mysterious cart, stuck in a rut or resting on a steep hill. And when the horses were to be urged, it was done with patting and whispering, never with anger or loud voices. The moon seemed to understand, and it shone upon the stage and the actors with a quiet mysticism.

In the early hours of the morning they came to the headwaters of Loch Eck. Margaret did not feel weary. The pace had been easy. There had been plenty of rests, and her mind had been too much occupied for weariness.

The smugglers paid no heed to her. In this connection she also observed that the contrabanditti paid no attention to the Frenchman. Jules Guerin always walked alone, with his chin on his breast. When stops were made the Frenchman invariably drew apart from the others, and stood with his arms folded, staring meditatively at the moon.

"It is he, and it is not he," concluded Margaret, feeling rather glad that she did not care whether it was he or not he.

By first dawn the cart was meandering

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along the down-sloping road by the side of the river Echaig, which flows southward out of Loch Eck into an arm of the Firth of Clyde. The river roared amid the blackness of surrounding thick woods.

"It is but two miles to the Cothouse," whispered McHendrick to Margaret. "You are not too tired, little lady?"

"No."

All at once there was movement on the road ahead. The darkness and the noise of the river had covered the approach of a body of men. The horses came to a standstill, as if by instinct and training. The last light of the moon and the first gray glimmer of day revealed the obstruction as red.

"Now for it!" whispered the shepherd, bracing his shoulders and gripping his staff.

"Halt!" cried a voice. Out of the body of red came a man on a horse. Margaret at once recognized him as one of the officers of Fort James. It was Lieutenant Yorke.

"Who comes?" he demanded, riding into the smugglers' midst.

One of the smugglers — a red-headed man

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—immediately wrung his hands and burst into loud wailing.

“We are trapped! We are trapped! Oh, sir, I beg of you to spare me. ’T was but for a little profit. Times are hard on the poor man, and it is no great sin —”

“Smuggling? Ha!” Yorke’s tone was amused, rather than stern.

“Very well, my good man,” said he. “Stop whining. I am not after smugglers. I’ll report the matter to the revenue collectors, however. Look out for yourself. But I want to have a look at your men. Line up there!”

The Red Mole — as the smuggler leader was nicknamed for his hair and his cunning — ordered his followers to stand up for inspection. The Red Mole seemed mightily relieved, although he had anticipated this very result of the encounter. The soldiers would not trouble the smugglers — indeed, they traded with them for cheaper whisky — and the red-headed man, having something else to conceal, had made a fash about his minor iniquity with eminent success.

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"Line up! Line up!" he cried eagerly. "Let the gentleman see you all. Take off your bonnets to the king's officer."

The party lined up, Margaret standing close by her friend, the shepherd, who immediately began to growl.

"Smugglers — hey?" he grunted. "Fine company for an honest man and his lass. 'T would serve ye well did the king's officer string ye to a rowan-tree. Then I'd be rid of ye."

He went on snarling, half to himself, until Yorke, looking up from the face of Jules Guerin, said:

"What is that man growling about?"

"Growling about? Growling!" rumbled the shepherd. "Who would not growl to travel with a daughter in the company of honest merchants who turn out to be robbers and smugglers? Growl!"

Yorke laughed at the shepherd's dismay of discovery; but suddenly the lieutenant sobered up. Was this a trick?

"Here! Let me see your face!"

McHendrick raised his dour visage to the



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soldier. Yorke saw the pepper-and-salt plaid, the crooked staff, the immense, horny hands, the bristling, gray brows — and laughed again.

“Be careful of your company in future, my man. Is this your lass? May I ask you to take the shawl from your face, my dear?”

Margaret obeyed, revealing just enough of her countenance to satisfy the soldier that she was a woman. The gallant redcoat smiled and took off his cocked hat.

Then Yorke hesitated. He was satisfied, and yet — His eyes traveled down the line of faces, and settled once more upon that of the Frenchman.

“You!” said he. “What is your name?”

“Ju-ju-ju-ju-ju —” began the Frenchman, like a steaming kettle spout.

“Heavens!” exclaimed Yorke. “What ails the man?”

“*Jules!*” burst from the Frenchman’s lips with a note of triumph. “Gu-gu-gu-gu —”

“Somebody help him,” said the redcoat, with a laugh.

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"*Guerin!*" roared the Frenchman, unassisted.

"He stutters," said Yorke, his mind diverted for the moment. "What are you doing here, Jules?"

Then the oddity of the thing drove suspicion clean out of the officer's head. His men, too, seemed to be enjoying the entertainment of a man speaking French with a bad stutter. Yorke understood French, and Guerin's lengthy explanation, prolonged in every syllable, was screamingly ridiculous to him.

It appeared that Jules was a sailor. He did not understand English, and found it h-hard en-n-nough to speak his o-own l-language without t-trying any o-other. It mattered little what else he said by way of explanation. Yorke was leaning back in his saddle, laughing uproariously, whereat Jules became angry, and stuttered so badly in his fury that he choked green-red in the face, and threw up his hands in tragic despair.

Presently, the cart having revealed no prince in hiding, the redcoats allowed the smugglers to proceed, Yorke playfully re-

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marking that it was a bad night for smuggling, as the red-headed man and his party would be like to learn before they reached their destination—if they were allowed to reach it at all.

An hour later the smugglers left their mysterious cart in a coppice, and themselves entered the Cothouse Inn. The inn was an innocent-looking place. The only person in sight was a woman, rather handsome in a worldly way, but with every symptom of private tippling. It presently appeared that the Red Mole was her husband, and that her name was his real one, with a mistress tacked on—Mrs. Baldy Currie.

The inn was a plain, two-story affair. Upstairs were lodgings for *gentlemen*; downstairs was accommodation for *man and beast*. Into the big living-room at the head of a wooden staircase Margaret and the shepherd were presently ushered.

A huge man, remarkably handsome as a masculine type, arose at their entrance. He stared at Margaret, nodded curtly to the shepherd, and then turned an inquiring eye

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upon the Red Mole. Currie lifted two fingers in a peculiar way, and the giant sat down again.

Presently Margaret was given a room to rest in, and the shepherd found himself alone with the giant in the living-room. The rest of the smugglers were downstairs, daffing with Mrs. Baldy, who was cursing like a virago that she had so many to cook breakfast for.

"Well, what's all this, McHendrick?" demanded the giant. "Who is the petticoat?"

McHendrick drew the door close, and told a tale in a whisper. The giant's face grew darker.

"Faugh!" he exclaimed. "What fool's game is this? Is it not enough to risk your neck every trip without making a national issue of it? The revenue would like fine to catch me smuggling whisky. How much more would they like to catch Heather Bloom smuggling princes — hey?"

"If ye can do one, ye can do the other," said McHendrick.

"That's true enough," admitted the giant,

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with a grin. "But think of the risk and the trouble if I'm caught. Heather Bloom, smuggler, has hidden beneath the coat of Captain John Grant, pillar of respectable religion in Morag, often enough; but what chance for either if Captain John Grant is caught smuggling Charles Edward, King of Scotland, back to France, when the country's swarming with redcoats?"

"Well?" said McHendrick tentatively. He knew his man — knew that his protestations usually ended as this one did.

"Well, one more risk won't matter much in the long run," said the smuggler, tapping the table with a great hairy fist. "I'll do it! Where's your man? Let me see what a king looks like."

The shepherd smiled as he noted the sparkle of adventure-love in the handsome giant's eyes. He went to the door and drew it open just as it seemed to come inward to meet him. Major Fitzwilliam, his face particularly repulsive under its bruised markings, stepped into the room.

"Ah, pardon me, gentlemen," said he, with

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a *blasé* smile. "Do I intrude? I was looking for a Frenchman by the name of Jules Guerin."

"He is not here," said McHendrick quietly.

"Who is in that room?" asked Fitzwilliam, advancing toward the door behind which Margaret lay resting.

"Stop!" said the shepherd, barring the way with his crook-staff.

"Indeed! Whom do you conceal?"

"There is a woman in that room. You cannot enter there."

"Pardon me," said Fitzwilliam, turning away. He looked at the giant. "What is your name, sir?"

"What's yours?" retorted the giant, seemingly much amused. "Did ye fall and tread on your nose, that it's so red? Or did ye wipe it on your coat?"

"Sir!" thundered Fitzwilliam.

"Tut, tut!" said Grant unpleasantly. "Run away and play soldier, little man."

Fitzwilliam grew crimson with anger. He reached to his sword-hilt, while the giant smuggler regarded him with contemptuous

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eyes. A battle was averted only by Margaret suddenly appearing in the doorway of the bedroom. She had been disturbed by the loud voices.

Fitzwilliam half turned and glanced at her. Then he wholly turned and stared at her. His face expressed cunning satisfaction.

"Ah!" he said softly. "Miss Dalgleish, of Inverlachie. I salute you, *ma'mselle*. Good-morning, gentlemen." He waved a hand to Heather Bloom, alias Captain Grant, as he passed out. "Presently, my friend," said he.

Fitzwilliam descended the wooden staircase. The smugglers were noisily eating porridge. The major looked along the line of them, but saw no one who could possibly be a Frenchman, let alone the Frenchman that fool Yorke had so wittily described. To his inquiries before he had gone upstairs Fitzwilliam had received little satisfaction. The men said at first that there was no Frenchman, then admitted that he had disappeared.

But Fitzwilliam was highly pleased with himself as he left the inn. He walked down

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the road toward the river, keeping close to the ditch. Out of the corners of his eyes he saw an occasional flash of red, and to each flash of color he said quietly, without turning his head:

“Remain on guard, and challenge any one who leaves the Cothouse. Pass the word around the line.”

He himself continued toward the river, not far distant. Presently he crossed the rude bridge that spanned the Echaig. He walked slowly along the river-bank road on the opposite side, his eyes open for wheel-marks. He presently found them, where they turned into a deep coppice.

He stepped into the woods, following the tracks. But he did not go ten paces before a quiet, even voice addressed him. Looking up, he saw a man dressed like a French sailor. But in broad daylight Fitzwilliam, at least, was not to be deceived, either by the costume or by the fact that Casimir had shaved off his beard and mustache. In his right hand Charles Edward carried a naked sword, although he wore neither sword-belt nor scabbard.



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“Good morning, Captain — Major Fitzwilliam,” said the American, with a cold smile. “If it suits you, I find the time convenient for the settling of our private matters. Are you ready, sir?”

## CHAPTER XIX

### THE PRINCE PASSES

LATE that evening Margaret, tired in soul and body, found herself seated before a fire. She was dimly conscious that she was in the house of a quiet, sad little woman, called Mrs. Grant, and that the house was in the village of Morag, about fifteen miles from the Cothouse.

How she arrived here she hardly knew. It had been a wild race, in which her physical strength and mental determination had been tried to the utmost. She had a confused memory of following at the heels of two stalwart men — one the shepherd, the other the big smuggler, Captain Grant, Mrs. Grant's husband — and the road was rough and unbeaten. Indeed, it was not a road at all. Circumstances had forced the trio from the beaten paths, and they had skulked over

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the heather late in the dusk of the day, hiding at intervals and pressing on at every opportunity.

Yes, it was a confused memory of turmoil, fraught with terror and physical pain. Margaret's nerves had been strung to a tense pitch. Exhausted as she now was, the very tension of what she had undergone left her sleepless. She merely sat before the fire, rigid in her weariness, and stared into the glowing peat.

And before the race — what was it? She remembered a rapid tattoo upon her door at the Cothouse, and the shepherd whispering frantically. When she emerged, fully dressed, she found the shepherd impatiently awaiting her, while standing by the closed door of the living-room, with his ear bent to the wood-work, was the giant smuggler.

"Come!" said McHendrick. "The Prince is gone. He is either in the hands of the redcoats or on his way to Morag. If he is caught, we can do nothing. If he is not, then he knows what to do and where his only chance lies — at Morag. Come, girl!"

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"Very well," said Margaret coolly. "What am I to do? I am waiting."

The smuggler heard her, and ran to the window with a laugh. He opened it gently, peered outside, then climbed through the opening, and dropped to the ground. At the same time loud voices came from the lower portion of the inn.

"Jump!" said McHendrick, urging Margaret toward the window. "It is not far, and he will catch you."

Margaret blindly obeyed. Heather Bloom, the smuggler, caught her in his great arms, and lowered her gently to her feet. Then he looked up at the window, and whispered:

"Easy, old man. Your bones are brittle."

McHendrick lowered himself down the wall until Heather Bloom could grip his knees. Then he let go, and slid ungracefully to the ground, falling in a heap at the smuggler's feet. The shepherd scrambled up without a word. Then the race began.

Five minutes later Margaret was laboring forward as in a dream, one hand clinging to the crook of McHendrick's staff, the other

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being in use to claw the hillside and prevent herself from stumbling.

For two or three miles the two men and the woman went on in the gathering dusk. Finally the smuggler fell flat and waved his followers to the ground with a frantic down-jerking of his hand. Margaret put her face close to the heather, and heard, mingling with the thud of her own heart, the steady patter of horses' hoofs.

"Yon's Captain Kilby," whispered McHendrick. "That means three bodies of redcoats on the search."

Silence followed the dying away of the hoof-beats. Then Margaret heard the smuggler whisper:

"Come on."

Later, when it was quite dark, and they had gained a sheltered spot in a valley where there was a bit of wood, the smuggler called a halt. For a few minutes they half lay on the ground, panting.

"There'll be no whisky aboard the *Thistle Down* to-night," said the notorious smuggler, with a bit of a chuckle. "Just as well. They

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will have less suspicion of what the ship does carry.”

“What does it all mean?” asked Margaret impatiently.

Heather Bloom laughed softly in the darkness, and echoed her question half mockingly. It was McHendrick who replied.

“It came sudden,” said he, “and we had to move quickly. The Red Mole—the red-headed man, lass—went to prepare the cart for the trip to Morag, and found a dead man on the turf.”

“Who was it?” asked Margaret, quickly, almost shrilly.

“Whisht, lass!” cautioned the shepherd, while the smuggler growled. “The moors have ears this night. It was not the Prince. I’ll be thinking he is safe—somewhere—and we will find him waiting us at Morag, or on the way.”

“Who was it?” reiterated Margaret, but more quietly.

“It was the major—the one with the bruised face, who would ha’ burst into your room. He was killed by the sword, and there

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was a story pinned on his breast. What it means we none of us know, but it was perfectly plain that Prince Charlie killed him in fair fight."

"He — he killed a man," said Margaret in a low, fearful whisper.

"Imphm!" hummed the shepherd, fearing that he had divulged too much for woman's ears.

There was silence. Presently Margaret asked quietly:

"What was the story?"

"The captain here has it, and he can tell you if he will. It is all mysterious to us, but no doubt there was cause. Leastways, the Red Mole took the paper off, because it was in the nature of a confession and showed too plainly who killed Major Fitzwilliam. Princes are rash, and loyal men must curb rashness for them."

"What was the confession?" persisted Margaret.

McHendrick made no answer, but in the darkness he looked toward the huge shadow of the smuggler.

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Grant laughed, and said, from memory:

“ ‘Here lies one who, for the good of mankind, were better thus. I, Charles Edward, killed him in a private and personal quarrel. This paper is laid on his breast in loving memory, not of his virtues, but of those that he destroyed.’ It is signed ‘Charles Edward.’ Fool!”

“Murderer!” said a hot voice in Margaret’s soul.

The door of the room opened, and Mrs. Grant entered.

“Will ye not lie down, lass?” she asked in her kind but wearied voice. She was a small woman, and her face depicted unutterable sorrow.

“No,” said Margaret stonily. “I cannot.”

“Ye are fretting?” said the woman. “Why? He is safe. He reached the place that only my husband can tell of. None can ever find him. If they could find that place—Oh, Lord, how long!” she suddenly said, monotonously. “It is where they smuggle the hellish stuff through to the ship. The tide



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is low — just right for safety. Will ye not sleep?"

To Margaret's ears the words came without meaning. What did it matter to her that a cheat, a liar, an impostor, a murderer, had been smuggled through the hills to some place where smugglers carried on their secret business, and that presently the ship she had seen in the Bay of Morag would carry off Charles Edward Casimir? What was it to her? And why did she sit there, instead of obeying the woman's wish that she rest? She was waiting for something. But what?

When the door opened and Charles Edward Casimir stood before her, she knew that she had been waiting for him. The knowledge that her heart still loved the ideal of him made her furious.

"Well?" she said bitterly. "Have you come to tell me that you have added murder to your crimes?"

"No," said he sadly. "It was his life or my liberty. Also, he murdered a woman, years ago, as I suspect he would have murdered another. But why talk about that which I

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cannot explain, and which it will not help you to know?"

"No. It would not help," said Margaret, with a hard laugh.

She turned her back on him, because his face was good to look upon at that moment. It was sad, but frank; yearning, yet resigned. And Margaret knew that she loved and hated him still — loved him because she hated him, hated him because she loved him.

"I know what I seem to you," he said, from a depth of respect and sorrow. "But you saw me at my worst. If ever you meet me again, you could not fail to see me in a better light and to think better of me. I will not presume to ask you to think well of me, now or ever; but, Margaret, out of the necessity of self-respect and what your esteem means to me, even if love does not compel me back, I shall come again."

He turned to go, but lingered on his step, as if hoping against hope that she would have one word of kindness for the lonely path that he was to travel. But the one word she ut-

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tered was far from kind in its imperative, angry utterance:

“Go!”

Five minutes later, Captain Kilby, with a cocked pistol in his right hand, threw open the door of the room and boldly stepped inside.

“Charles Edward Casimir —” he began sternly, half raising the pistol. Then he stopped.

The Prince was not in the room.

The only occupant was a girl seated at a table, with her face buried in her arms and her shoulders shaken by convulsive sobs. She did not look up as he entered. She did not seem to hear the door open.

Kilby stepped out and quietly drew the door after him.

“Gone!” he said, half aloud. And a look of relief and gladness crossed his face.

## CHAPTER XX

### THREE WOMEN

**A** DECEMBER night two years and three months later.

The schoolmaster, James Dalglish, was in his "stewdy." He was in his usual "stewdious" attitude—flat on his stomach on the rag mat, his elbows for props, his hands for chin crutches, and the fender for a reading-desk. The peat fire, the only light in the room, cast the grotesque shadow of his whitened, shaggy head on the wall behind.

The windmill nailed to the apple tree in the kailyard shrieked outside. But the figure on the rag mat never moved. The dominie, grown sadly old and somewhat childish, was reading his Burns. His eyes were bent closer to the print than of yore, and his lips moved as he conned the lines:

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"Then gently scan your brother man,  
Still gentler, sister woman;  
Though they may gang a kennin' wrang,  
To step aside is human."

"Ay, ay," muttered the dominie, nodding his head, "'t is human — eeminently human."

From the kitchen came the diminishing clatter of spoons and dishes. Margaret would be finished "redding up" the tea things. Presently she came and stood in the doorway for a few moments, her eyes fixed upon the white, shaggy head before the fire.

Dalglish was changed. The last two years and three months had been a mingling of joy and sorrow — joy that his Prince had escaped to France unharmed; sorrow that failure had again marred the cause of the Jacobite.

He had found joy, too, in the tribulations which beset him when the English government sought to convict him of treason. He had suffered for his rightful king — as the dominie still held Charles Edward. If there was any disappointment, it was that his willing sacrifice had not been accepted. The English government, upon inquiry, had only learned

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that a kind old man had sheltered a shipwrecked and helpless one. It could not be shown that the dominie ever knew what nature of man he was harboring.

The chieftains had scurried back to their mountain fastnesses, with the exception of a few — such as Cameron and the Macdonald and the Macgregor — who paid a visit to foreign parts until the wind died down. For the rest, Inverlachie was as it had been — externally.

Of internal affairs, such as do not meet the casual eye, there is still much to be told. But the Maclarty brothers were again on the beach, morning, noon, and night, with their eye on the weather-point; the anvil was ringing behind the schoolhouse; Sandy McClung, Davie Blue, Hughie Gibson, and British Will nightly foregathered at “Gangy” Beckett’s; and the windmill on the apple tree shrieked like a wraith when the wind blew up from the Atlantic.

Margaret was changed, although in the change there was nothing unexpected to the eye. She was no longer a girl. She was in the full flush of womanhood, and her quiet

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reserve and introspective air might well have been part of a natural development of character.

As she stood in the doorway, she knew that all the bitterness her heart entertained against Charles Edward Casimir was for the poor old man on the rag mat. The white hair was the mark of it, and that she could never forgive — at least, not while the man was absent. If he would come back and — and let her show him that white head, and let him feel what had caused it — Ah, well, he would not come again, and so she would remain inconsistently bitter to the end.

The fiddle hung over the book-shelf as of yore, but it was seldom touched now. It hurt her to play, and it moved the old man too deeply. He would burst into tears, or rise to his feet and walk up and down the “stewdy” in a white heat of reminiscence and racial frenzy that was agonizingly embittering to her. No, the fiddle was seldom touched nowadays. She did not offer to play; he did not ask.

Margaret sat with the old man a while. He read her a poem by Burns, and expounded

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its meaning in a childishly pedantic way. By and by she arose and, putting on a shawl, left the house.

It was a clear night, with wind rushing among stars that seemed to sway in the wide heavens. Stars! It brought a thrill of ancient joy to her heart, for she remembered that it was Christmas Eve.

She climbed the cobbled street, and turned off into the lane which brought her to the Back Road of the village. Presently she tapped at the door of Janet's house, and entered without waiting for a response.

Janet's "family" was assembled. Daft Willie, on the floor, was roaring commands to a regiment of wooden soldiers, presented to him by Dr. Wallace. Peggy Wallace was sitting by the fireplace, conversing quietly with Janet, who was knitting a pair of masculine hose. The women looked up and smiled a welcome to Margaret. Daft Willie hustled his soldiers around, so that their wooden salute seemed to be in the newcomer's special honor.

The "family" settled down. Their inter-



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course suggested nothing of the tragedy which each carried in her heart. Janet — the patient, motherly Janet — went on knitting and smiled at the remarks of the younger women, or spoke in gentle reproof to the roaring general on the floor.

Peggy fished some crochet work from the folds of her dress, and began plying her bone needle. She seemed happier than she had been two years before. The man — the serpent of her Eden — was dead. They had tried to fix the blame of his death upon Captain Kilby, for it became known that there had been bad blood, although the reason was never surmised.

Failing in that effort to convict, the government had the Red Mole arrested. (The leader of the smugglers quietly retired behind his cloak of respectability, as Captain John Grant, and deplored the "evils of the times.") It was when the Red Mole was in danger of a "sair throat" that Grant passed the word and a paper. Then it became apparent that Fitzwilliam had met his death at the hands of the Pretender.

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The Pretender? He had vanished the day after the finding of Fitzwilliam's body. No doubt he had escaped to France. Thus ended the Stuart rising.

Yes, Peggy was happier. She had not seen Kilby in two years. But from a foreign field of war she had received a note from a brother officer, who had never seen Peggy, and could only address her as "Peggy Wallace, Inverlachie, Scotland."

"If I know anything of George Kilby and of his affairs," said the note, "he will return to Inverlachie sooner or later." It was unsigned.

Margaret was a mystery to the other two, as she was in many ways to herself. She had returned as mysteriously as she had disappeared from her father's house two years and three months before. Only her father knew where she had been, what she had done, and something of what she had undergone. Janet Glen never asked, but she looked at Margaret that first day after her return, and her look had been laden with sympathy.

Only this Margaret knew of her own heart

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— that she loved, and that the love could not die, even though its idol had been shattered. She lived on, still loving the idol, and trying to forget the man, and there was a hope that carried her from day to day and through the nights — the hope that — the hope that —

There her understanding of herself ceased.

About nine o'clock Margaret and Peggy gathered their sewing together, and bade Janet good-night. Daft Willie had already gathered up his regiment and gone to bed in the scullery. Together the two young women passed into the street. It was a custom of theirs to take turn about at seeing each other home. To-night it was Margaret's turn to play escort.

Why they did this neither of them could have explained. They spoke little. There was a tacit understanding that they understood each other, and it was understood that they should not discuss the understanding.

Presently Margaret said good-night at Peggy's gate. She herself returned to the square, whitewashed house, where she invariably found the white-haired dominie still read-

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ing, or sound asleep, flat on the rag mat before the fire.

Peggy found her father, the doctor, seated by his own hearthside "talking to the peat," as he was wont to describe a habit of late years.

"Well," said he, with a ghost of his old cheery smile, "how's 'Mother Janet' to-night?"

"Happy," said Peggy, hanging her shawl on a nail and sitting down.

Wallace glanced at her face, and smiled at the light therein.

"It's a blessing to many," said he, apropos of nothing, "that yon scoundrel Napoleon is at last cooped up on Elba, and the soldiers are getting a chance to see their sweethearts."

Peggy blushed. She was about to make some retort, when there came a sharp tap at the door. The doctor leisurely arose and went to see the visitor, a frown on his face. The old summons, no doubt.

The man in the darkness was Sandy McClung. He whispered something to the doctor, who replied petulantly:

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"Oh, I'll come in the morning. A pill's all he needs."

"But —" began McClung. Catching a glimpse of Peggy beyond the doctor, he put his hands to his mouth and whispered. Wallace started, and his face became suddenly gray.

"I'll come at once," he said unsteadily. Wallace shut the door. He presently put on his hat and coat and took up his little medicine bag.

"Is it something serious?" asked Peggy, quick to note a subtle disturbance in her father's answer.

"No," said he quietly. "But it may be late before I can leave the man. Don't wait up, lass. Good-night."

Janet had laid aside her knitting and was dreaming over the fire. The daft boy was asleep in the scullery. The stillness of reverie and reverie's environment was broken by the same sharp tap that had disturbed the doctor. McClung stood at the door.

What Sandy whispered to Janet produced

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a marked effect. She reeled slightly, and clutched at the door for support. But instantly the woman, who had prepared for this moment through many years, remembered her resolve. She said simply:

“Very well. His room is ready.”

“Davie Blue and British Will are bringin’ him now,” whispered Sandy.

“Get a doctor at once,” she said, throwing open the door of the spare room.

“I stopped on the way,” said Sandy. “Dr. Wallace will be here as soon as — as —”

“Dr. Wallace!” she echoed stonily. “Oh!”

For a moment she seemed about to give way to some turmoil of emotion, but she mastered herself, as there came the unsteady tramp of men carrying an awkward burden.

Presently Davie Blue and the town-crier entered, carrying between them — by the head and feet — the figure of a man. At a glance he was some poor weakling who had sunk into the mire of drunkenness and was beyond help. He was breathing laboriously; he reeked foully of stale whisky, and his eyes, upturned

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in his head, were as dull as a dead animal's. But after a glance, Janet merely said:

"Yes. It's my husband. Bring him in."

They placed Richard Glen on the bed which he had forsaken seventeen years before. Janet stood near him and looked down into the bloated face.

This was what she had waited for. This was the reward of her atonement. He would live, for was he not merely inebriated? And the old tale would be resumed—the tale of drunkenness on one side and heart-broken resignation on the other. Oh, it was hard—hard; and there was the knowledge of Tom Wallace's love—the love that had respected her in silence for two years and three months—

The bedroom door opened abruptly. Dr. Wallace paused, hat in hand, at the portal. He flashed only one glance at Janet; then, with his eyes fixed on the drunkard, he advanced slowly, gravely, toward the bed.

For a moment he stood there, looking at the face. His own countenance never moved, although into his eyes crept a slow, savage

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gleam. But all at once he turned very pale. He hurriedly set down his hat and his bag. He turned upon Davie Blue and British Will and Sandy McClung, who had been watching the eyes that surveyed the patient. With a flashing glance he addressed them.

"Out of here, you men!" he said sharply. "And you — Sandy — send to Morag at once for Dr. Gillespie. I must have help here. You understand? — before morning. Away with you — quick!"

As he was speaking, and as the men went through the doorway, Wallace, self-submerged in duty to others, whipped off his coat and tore open his bag. Janet stood by, helpless and dazed. It seemed a few minutes — it was really an hour — before she became conscious that the man on the bed was breathing more steadily, and that Tom Wallace was holding a small bottle close to his nostrils.

"Janet," said Wallace quietly, "who is this?"

"My husband," she said.

"M-m-m-m!" he hummed. "I hope that doctor gets here before morning."



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Wallace seemed to be talking to himself.

"I've got to save this man. I must! Don't you see I must? He must not die in my hands."

There was silence. Presently Wallace turned a pair of cold, disinterested eyes upon Janet Glen.

"Hot water, please," said he, abruptly.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THREE MEN

ON the morning of the day before Christmas there were three strangers in the ferry-boat from Greenock to the village of Morag. One was a soldier. But he was not altogether a stranger after the boatman had surveyed him keenly. The ferryman felt sure that this was Kilby, the redcoat captain who used to be in command at Fort James — the same who was accused of having killed the big major.

The second man was a tall, smooth-faced gentleman having a foreign air about his speech and his dress. The ferryman was sure that he had never clapped eyes on this man before. That Kilby was only slightly and recently acquainted with the foreigner, the shrewd ferryman also perceived. Indeed, he knew quite well that, when the two gentlemen bowed to each other as the ferry started from

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Greenock, it was merely because they might be passing acquaintances on a short voyage down the Firth.

The third stranger was very unlike the other two. He was a miserable specimen of humanity, or rather of what humanity can bring itself to. Even at that early hour of the day the man was half intoxicated. It may have been a habit, or it may have been that the spirit of the season was running hospitably in his veins, but every now and then he winked at the other two passengers, and with a silly, weak smile, took a pull at a flask which he drew from an inner pocket. Once — only once — he offered a dram to his fellow travelers. They declined with a gentle firmness that amounted almost to a rebuke.

“’T is Christmas!” pleaded the inebriate. “Le’s all be good frien’s. My name’s Glen — Dick Glen.”

Neither of the other two volunteered his name as a return courtesy. The inebriate winced. There was something about him that suggested a gentleman of other and better years.

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"Excuse me," said he, waving his hand airily. "I'm on'y a soldier — a plain soldier — coming home f'm the wars."

"So am I," said Kilby, with sharp impatience.

The inebriate glanced fearfully at the man who had spoken. In the strong face and the incisive tongue he thought he perceived an officer. A habit of recent years asserted itself. He half raised his hand to the salute. Kilby was looking away, however.

"Well, we seem to be in for an era of peace," said the foreigner, stepping into the awkward pause.

"We?" said Kilby, smiling. "I should have taken you for a — pardon me — a Frenchman."

"If I were a Frenchman," replied the foreigner, laughing, "I should be likely to resent the 'pardon.' No, I am American."

"Ah!" said Kilby. He gazed into the other's brown eyes and laughed lightly. "A week ago I might have been tempted to arrest you, but we are of the blood once more."

"Yes," said the American. "To-day — this

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is the 24th — the treaty of Ghent should be signed."

"Indeed, this is news to me," said Kilby. "Of course, a treaty was in the making, but —"

"I know," said the stranger. "It will not be known officially in England for some days yet, but — I have just come from Paris. The treaty is being signed to-day at Ghent. There will be no more war, let us hope, between the United States and England."

"Then it does mean an era of peace," said Kilby, his face expressing his pleasure and relief. "Napoleon is cooped up in Elba, and there he will remain."

"Perhaps," said the foreigner dryly. "At least, it means a breathing spell. You travel far?"

"I ride horse from Morag to a little village called Inverlachie, on Loch Fyne," said Captain Kilby. "It is more comfortable going and shorter to ride through the glens across country."

"Fortunate," said the American. "I go to Inverlachie also. May I presume upon a

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short acquaintanceship? We might travel more cheerily together."

"Ver' thing!" exclaimed the inebriate. "I'm for Inv'rlachie, too. All travel together. Have a race!"

"My name is Kilby — Captain Kilby, of his Majesty's Tenth Fusiliers," said the soldier, ignoring the inebriate's sudden enthusiasm.

"Indeed," said the American. "Mine is Richmond — of the United States diplomatic corps. A new body," he added with a smile, "but nations must begin sometime, somewhere."

"We will exchange pleasant hostilities on the way!" laughed Kilby.

"No vi'lence, gen'l'men — no vi'lence!" put in the inebriate.

Captain Kilby and Mr. Charles Richmond, of Virginia, reached the village of Inverlachie in the dusk of Christmas Eve. They turned their horses over to Davie Blue, the blacksmith, who had always a spare horse-stall or two. They also turned over to "Gangy"

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Beckett, the landlord of the only tavern, an inebriated person whom they had been forced by humane considerations to assist over the road from Morag. The man was by this time far gone in intoxication.

"Gangy" would have refused to take him in, but he feared to offend two such fine-appearing gentlemen as his prospective guests. While he was still scratching his head and muttering something about the reputation of his house, the inebriate suddenly collapsed on the floor.

"Poor fellow," said the American. "Put him to bed and take care of him. You will not lose by it, mine host. Remember, it is Christmas. Be generous, with good-will to the least of men."

The American was then shown to his room. As he left the public-house, he bowed to Captain Kilby, but said nothing about meeting him again. Kilby, himself, was glad of this. He, too, went to the room which "Gangy" informed him was ready.

An hour later, as Captain Kilby came downstairs, he encountered Mr. Richmond at the

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front door. The American was leisurely surveying the cobbled street and drawing on a pair of gloves. Kilby stood beside him, wishing that he had not met him just at this particular juncture — for the captain had business on hand. But the American did not see him, his attention being momentarily diverted by the sight of two men carrying a third out of the public-house door of the tavern.

The man being carried was the inebriate. Mr. Richmond turned angrily, as if he would return into the tavern and ask the landlord why the man was not being kept in the house. He came face to face with the captain.

“Ah!” said he, smiling pleasantly. “We meet again. Excuse me. I wish to ask the host why my orders were ignored.”

He went inside, and learned from “Gangy” that the inebriate had been recognized as a man of the town and was being carried to his home.

“He’s a ne’er-do-weel that was ca’d Dick Glen,” said Beckett. “He’s in good hands, though, an’ his wife is waitin’ for him.”



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"I'm sorry for his wife," said the American, shortly.

When he came out of the front door again, Captain Kilby had gone—a circumstance which pleased the American. Mr. Richmond presently bent his steps along the cobbled street in the direction of the square, whitewashed house on the hill.

Captain Kilby stood for a minute at the gate of the doctor's cottage. He had not been there since that day when Peggy leaned against the gate-post and pleaded for her love and for vengeance. Kilby was thinking of it now, and it surprised him to find that his heart was light and his mind quiet. War had taught him the littleness of some things. He passed through the gate and advanced through the doctor's flower-beds toward the cottage door. He tapped.

He heard feet—light feet. A woman was coming. He had expected the doctor himself. But perhaps it was a servant. He could hardly believe that the light feet coming toward him on the other side of the door

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were those of the woman he loved, the woman he had dreamed of afar.

The door opened. Peggy stood silhouetted against the light of the living-room at the end of the hall. She could not distinguish the visitor in the darkness, and her own body shadowed his face.

"Is Dr. Wallace at home?" asked a voice that stirred her indescribably.

"No," she answered. "He has been summoned out to-night, and he will be late getting back."

There was a long pause. She still failed to recognize in the dim figure the man her heart and soul had been calling back to her for two years and three months. He, on his side, had not foreseen this possibility — of the doctor being out, and Peggy herself answering his inquiries.

But all at once a soft, unsteady voice whispered:

"George."

"Yes. It is I," said the man in the darkness.

In another minute he was in the living-room, facing her. He saw only happiness in

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her eyes. In his face she saw yearning, and the mark of long absence.

"Peggy," he said directly, "will you marry me?"

"N-no!" she gulped. "Would you marry me?"

"Yes," he said, "on one condition — that you never utter a certain name again, that you never refer in any way to — to —"

"Oh, you great heart!" she cried, suddenly falling upon her knees at his feet.

"Don't!" he whispered, half inarticulate. He raised her with strong arms that held her close. "Don't! That is worse than — Peggy, I must make the condition more thorough — never by thought, word, or *act* — My love is greater than I, Peggy."

Mr. Richmond walked slowly along the cobbled street. Presently he came to the dominie's house. How many years had passed since the night when he slipped from that door, passed through the crowd, and gained the moors and safety?

What had he not undergone since then?

### THREE MEN

Inverlachie and the dominie and Margaret had sometimes seemed as a dream, which came before his gaze as he peered through the smoke of the patriots' guns. The dream had come in strange places and at strange moments, as a dream will. And here, after all, was Inverlachie, the same — the square, whitewashed house, the same. The tin windmill on the apple tree was whirring, the same. Would the dominie be the same? Would Margaret be the same?

He braced his shoulders, advanced to the front door, and knocked. Margaret, having divested herself of her shawl, had again taken her place in the armchair in the "stewdy" when the knock sounded. Her father went on reading. The tin windmill shrieked in crescendo as a rush of wind whined around the gables.

She quietly passed down the hall and threw open the door. Then she — and her heart — stood still. The light fell full upon the American's face.

For a moment the impulse was to cry his name and throw herself upon his breast. But —

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'Again the old contradiction of heart and mind struggled within her. She had waited for him once before—at the smuggler's house—and when he came then, she had ordered him from her presence. And now she had waited for him two years and three months—waited and waited, knowing not why—and again resentment was slowly rising in her heart.

He stood still, looking steadily up into her eyes. He saw her quiver and become still. He saw the first glad flush die out of her face, and in its place come a cold, pale stoniness of expression. He saw her head lift slowly, and her eyes glow with anger and scorn. He saw her take a lingering step backward. Then the door closed quietly in his face.

For a minute he stood rigid and erect in the wind-swept darkness. Then his chin fell to his breast. A minute later he was walking slowly back toward the tavern.

"Who was't?" queried the dominie, as Margaret returned to the armchair. "I thought I heard a knock."

"It was nobody," she answered quietly.

## CHAPTER XXII

### A MAN COMES WOOING

**F**OR a month after that Inverlachie drifted along with its little story of births, marriages, and deaths — births of little souls who were to grow up and figure in stories of their own; marriages that were the happy endings of stories past told.

But there was one great wedding in prospect that set the gossips wagging their tongues. They had known it all along, of course; which shows just how much they did not know about the love affair of Captain George Kilby, of his Majesty's Fusiliers, and Peggy, the doctor's lass.

There was one death, too — that of Richard Glen. When the doctor came from Morag on horseback, Wallace resigned the case. He had an urgent "regular" case to attend to, he explained. Dr. Gillespie shrugged his

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shoulders as he looked at the patient, and said something about it being "better to physic the living than doctor the dead."

Three days later Richard Glen died, with his hand in his wife's. Before he died he said something to Janet that told her she had more than atoned her early "faults." He died with her forgiveness on his soul and forgiveness of her upon his lips. And she prayed a while by his still figure. Sandy McClung did the rest.

After it was all over, Dr. Gillespie, speaking from his saddle before "Gangy's" public-house, said that the man was as good as dead before he came to Inverlachie. Fixing his eye upon British Will and Davie Blue and Hughie Gibson, who were half full of the season's cheer, he said severely:

"Every drop of whisky you put into your stomach is a nail self-driven into a pretty shabby-looking coffin. You ought to bless God that you have a man like Wallace in this village. It was only his skill kept that man alive through the first night. He was suffering from a rum fit, gentlemen. Good-morning!"

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“Losh!” exclaimed “Gangy” Beckett. “They doctors wad gie a man the shivers. Weel, it’s Christmas, lads. Come awa’ in an’ tak’ a dram oot o’ the profits.”

“Weel,” said Davie Blue, scratching his head, “if ye’ll excuse me —” He wavered and was lost. And British Will, who had been wondering what whisky might have had to do with his last stroke of apoplexy, decided to begin afresh — the day after New Year.

Dr. Wallace, in the meantime, stayed much to himself. He went to Dick Glen’s funeral and then for a walk in the hills, leaving Peggy and Kilby to do as they pleased. Later, he came home and found the pair sitting at opposite sides of the hearth. There was a solitary armchair, empty and forlorn, right before the fire between them.

“You might as well have stayed where you were,” said Wallace with a smile. “I was n’t thinking of sitting down, myself.”

Day after day the lonely doctor wistfully watched the lovers. He seemed unable to get away from them. He saw them in the parlor by the hearth; he saw them in the garden —



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the flowerless garden — picking weeds every morning, and when they were absent he saw them hand in hand on the moors. He saw them everywhere.

At the end of a week he could stand it no longer. He jammed his bonnet on his head, threw on his topcoat (with such haste that the collar was turned in at the back of his neck) and marched away to Janet's cottage.

She was sewing when he entered, but she looked up with a smile that had no surprise in it.

"Janet," he began.

"Tom," she said, "I'm surprised that Peggy would let you out of the house with your coat collar turned in. Come here."

He came to her side. Her hand went around his neck and fixed the wayward collar. As she tried to remove her arms he held her elbows upon his shoulders.

"Ay, Janet," said he helplessly. "I need you. Peggy is minding her soldier's coat collar these days. I have need of you, dear, and so has she, though she is too asleep-and-dreaming to realize it."

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Her eyes were averted, but she was smiling — the smile of great heart-content.

“And you need me, too, Janet,” he went on. “There’s no use denying it. You want little feet around the house. So do I; for the little feet I kept the home for are skedaddling off with a redcoat. Tell me what was on your tongue that night — that night long ago —”

She hushed him with a look. She did not remove her arms from his shoulders, but she lifted her head and closed her eyes. Over her face came a light of glory — the glory of her amazing womanhood.

“Tom,” she said, her voice rich, but soft; “to be as happy as I am now makes me feel that the ways of God are not so inscrutable. It is just that we are as children who must be taught. He gave me sorrow that He might fit me for happiness.” Her eyes unclosed. They widened with wonder as she looked at the honest, lined face so close to her own.

“Oh, Tom!” she whispered. “Is it really you? Is it really true?”

As Mr. Richmond, Charles Edward Casimir remained in Inverlachie. He had little call to

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go elsewhere. The treaty of Ghent was signed. The war in which he had laid down his own real life was over, and the country for which he had sacrificed his own soul was triumphant.

Back there, across the sea, he knew that the first gentleman in the land was awaiting him with an outstretched hand, full of honors for the man who, more than any, had engineered a national success, an international victory of strategy and diplomacy. In Inverlachie none knew of this, hardly even the man himself; for all that he had done was done, and all that he might receive counted as nothing. His whole life and his future happiness were staked in this little hamlet, in this remote corner of the Scottish Highlands.

The people came to know Mr. Richmond as a quiet, reserved "sort o' chiel" who had "sillar" and liked the quiet of Inverlachie. Despite native clannishness, the village folk received him with ever-growing frankness. He never attempted to intrude, but he was ever approachable, whether it was on the subject of the weather or the probable results of Napoleon's escape from Elba — for the Cor-

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sican was again at large and Waterloo was about-to-be-written history.

Every Sunday, the smooth-shaven, delicate face with the large, lingering eyes, was to be seen in the stranger's pew. The eyes seemed always upon the preacher. The fact that the dominie's pew was right under the preacher meant nothing to the good people of Inverlachie, for they could not connect the Dalgleishes with the foreign gentleman. The eyes, nevertheless, were really on the brown-haired lass in the front pew.

Margaret knew that he was there, but she never made a sign. She would pass him with her eyes fixed before her. Once their eyes met — only once. There was no scorn in her gaze, only an utter lack of recognition.

By and by the stranger entered more and more into the life of the community. The movements of the Corsican stirred a spirit from its Jacobite ashes. Once again the Saturday night gatherings were held in the schoolhouse, and once again the dominie spouted from the chair, while British Will thundered on behalf of the British Lion.

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Scotland was again the head and tail of the Lion.

It was after he had been in the village nearly six months, and when the Corsican's movements were again stirring the tempest of war, that Charles Edward Casimir spoke publicly.

It was at a meeting of the Clan. Margaret was there. The British Lion had just been roaring from Will Craig's mouth — roaring of the terrors that were in store for England if "something's no din richt awa' tae cr-r-r-rush Napolyin," when Mr. Richmond arose and bowed to the dominie. Jamie Dalglish, who had often marked this stranger, bowed recognition of his right to the floor.

Mr. Richmond spoke quietly, but as one with authority. He pointed out, with convincing calm, that there was little to fear from Napoleon. The Corsican's day was over. He had conquered at Leipsic, but the victory had been offset by the repeated failures of his generals elsewhere. They might say that Napoleon must win where he commanded in person, but a closer analysis of the situation

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tended to show that the man's power extended nowhere beyond his own shadow. He alone remained powerful because of his name and presence. A power like that must sooner or later fade.

"The day Napoleon meets England — and that day is near," said Mr. Richmond, amid absolute, attentive stillness, "that day will see a decisive battle in which Napoleon will sink to rise no more."

The speech, coming from the "reserved" Mr. Richmond, and conveying so much that appealed to common sense, made a great impression. After the gathering, Sandy McClung introduced the speaker to the chairman. Margaret stood behind her father, her face pale and expressionless.

"Ye mind me o' some one," said the dominie, with moisture in his eyes. He turned away abruptly, and, to cover a sudden emotion of memory, he said bluntly:

"This is my lass, sir. Margaret, this is Mr. Richmond."

Then Margaret did an odd thing. She smiled and held out her hand quite frankly.

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"How do you do, Mr. Richmond?" she said, with a quiet emphasis on the name.

A week later the dominie asked Mr. Richmond to eat supper at his house. It was after kirk. Richmond glanced at Margaret before replying. Her face expressed nothing.

"I will be happy to come, if nothing intervenes to make it impossible," said he.

Nothing intervened. He went. Margaret received him as a stranger with whom her father had become acquainted. Her own hands laid the plates and knives and forks. She herself waited on the two men. Casimir trembled as he helped himself to potatoes out of a dish that her hand held.

"Miss Margaret," said he confusedly, "will you not sit down and let me help you?"

"No," she said simply. "Scotland is a man's country."

After supper the two men went to the "stewdy" and smoked, while the clatter of dishes came from the kitchen. Casimir did not hear the old man's talk. Every sense was bent upon the kitchen, whence the last clack of the last saucer presently came. When Mar-

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garet appeared, having paused at the door to wipe her hands on her apron, Mr. Richmond paid more attention to what the dominie was saying.

"The first time I saw you I was minded of a great personage who once came to my house," the dominie was explaining.

Margaret glanced at Mr. Richmond; and she sat down. The stranger's face was drawn with pain. Her heart sympathized while it exulted. Jamie began to tell a story that had not passed his lips in years. Why he told it, neither Margaret nor Charles Edward Casimir ever understood, save that Mr. Richmond "minded him of that great personage."

The dominie's words grew more fervid as he spoke of the "king over the water." As was usual when he touched, even remotely, upon this stirring subject, he finished his outburst with a flood of berserk tears. Margaret, who was ever trying to steer her father away from the subject, forgot this time to guard, such was the intensity with which she was watching Richmond. Her father's anguish was as nothing to this man's. Casimir was



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being crucified, and every word that came from the old man's loyal heart was a white-hot nail that pierced the listener to the raw. His face was drawn and livid, but his ashen lips were set, as if he knew that this agony was good for his ailment, and that it must be borne to have good results.

He might have stopped the dominie with a plea of illness. He could have stopped him with some trivial remark, for tragedy readily retires abashed before bathos. But he said nothing; he did nothing. To Margaret's surprise he sat there and suffered, patiently, submissively, even when the old Jacobite spoke of Charles Edward's kingly bearing and physical beauty and mental nobility. There came a sheen of moisture to Casimir's brow — and all at once something snapped in Margaret's heart.

She slowly arose to her feet, her face radiant with compassion. But instantly Casimir looked up and half raised a hand.

"No," he said quietly. "I surely deserve to hear this story."

The dominie, who had been sitting with

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bowed head, trying to overcome his half-childish emotion, looked up. Casimir said to him, with deadly calm:

"Sir, is it not just possible, from all the facts in the case, as you have related them, that this man was a pretender in the strict sense — some contemptible spy —"

That was as far as he got. The dominie forgot his place as host in the realization, perhaps, that Mr. Richmond had forgotten his manners as guest.

"*Sir!*" he thundered.

"I beg your pardon," said Casimir humbly.

The dominie recovered himself instantly. He shook the tears from his face with a toss of his leonine head, and sat down with a frown. For a moment there was awkward stillness. Margaret, who had remained standing, took the fiddle and the bow from the nail over the book-shelf. She handed the instrument to Casimir and said:

"Sir, will you not play for my father — and me?"

He took the fiddle without a word. It was as if she connected him with the past in as-

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serting that he knew how to play the instrument. And in her voice—in her face—there was great compassion.

Margaret quietly sat down while he tuned the fiddle. He kept his face averted from hers, and presently he began to play. To her wonder and astonishment—and pain—he played the Jacobite lament, “Wae’s Me for Prince Chairlie”—played it with a meaning which she could not grasp, while she was conscious of a special significance.

From the last sad notes he drifted into something she had never heard before. He lingered among the deep notes in a long-drawn way, until the fiddle seemed to breathe of a great sorrow, a great repentance, and the desire for forgiveness. It was an appeal that words could never frame—the appeal that goes from heart to heart in the language of the soul.

No sooner had he laid down the fiddle than he arose hurriedly and bade his host good-night.

“So soon! Well, Margaret will show ye the door,” said Jamie. With a certain hearti-

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ness, as if he wished to dispel any ill-feeling over the stranger's unfortunate doubt of the Prince, he added:

"Take a good look at our front-door knocker, sir, so ye will know it often again."

At the front door, Charles Edward reached his hand to the knob. He knew she was close behind him. But he dared not pause. He dared not look at her. Enough for to-night! There was hope in his heart. He must be patient. And he would be.

But a little hand touched his as both groped for the door-knob. For a momentary eternity he looked into her eyes.

"Charlie!"

Her lips had not moved, yet he had heard his name whispered.

He straightened up, startled, amazed. She was looking up at him, as she had once looked before — before that day in the shepherd's cot. No longer was she the cold, expressionless woman of the smuggler's house, of the kirk, of the schoolhouse. She was again the girl Margaret, looking up to him with eyes that worshiped, pleaded, trusted.

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"Margaret!" he exclaimed, in a whisper.

He reached out his hands. She took them quietly and drew them together, holding them lightly between her own. Looking up at him again, she said simply:

"Mr. Richmond, I like you — more and more — not for what you did to-night, not for what you suffered for the sake of the truth, nor for waiting all these months. I don't think anything could ever make me love again, for, you see, I — I can't forget — I want to forgive you first. Then, perhaps —"

"Margaret!" he said, like a man talking softly in sleep.

"Yes," she said, with sudden coolness. She was striving to forgive and to convey forgiveness — no more — at least not yet. "I know I can never —"

She stopped. All at once she knew — she saw — that she was torturing him. The last strand of the steel cord that bound her heart broke, and her love expanded with a sudden eager longing.

She drew her hands free of his, but lingeringly, as if they exercised a magnetic power

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which was difficult to resist. She took a step backward and paused, regarding him from a little distance. Her face was lit with joy in him and a refound knowledge of herself.

“Good-night!” she whispered. “Good-night — good-night!”

THE END













